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The Right and Wrong of Private Judgment

(Conclusion)

"O ye theologians, what are you doing? Think ye that it is a trifling matter when the sublime Majesty forbids you to teach things that do not proceed from the mouth of the Lord and are something else than God's Word? It is not a threshers or herdsman who is here speaking" (Luther XIX:821). When men prefer those things that originate in their own minds to those that proceed out of the mouth of the Lord, they are doing an evil thing. We shall discuss this matter under four heads.

1. *Men who set their private judgment over God's Revelation commit the crime of lese majesty.* "Where God has spoken, the right of private judgment ceases. 2 Cor. 10:5; Deut. 4:2; 2 Cor. 2:17." (E. Koehler, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine*, p. 1.) In His holy temple God alone may speak; He alone can reveal the divine truths; let no man presume to speak for Him. And when the Lord has spoken, let all men keep silence before Him; let no man presume to criticize His Word. When the sublime Majesty proclaims: "O earth, earth, earth, hear the Word of the Lord!" (Jer. 22:29), shall the people say: Let us hear, Lord, what Thou sayest, and we shall decide how much of it can be accepted by us? God demands of us unquestioning acceptance of His Word; and they who question the veracity of Scripture and the fitness of its teachings commit the *crimen laesae maiestatis divinae*. Men are treating the King of Kings with disrespect when they want His proclamations issued as "subject to the approval of my subjects." The proper respect of our Lord and God inspires words like these: "God's Word will not stand trifling. If you cannot understand it, uncover your head before it. Es ist mit Gottes Wort nicht zu

scherzen. Kannst du es nicht verstehen, so zeuch den Hut vor ihm ab. Es leidet keinen Schimpf, noch keine menschliche Deutung, sondern es ist lauter Ernst und will geehrt und verhalten sein. Derhalben huete dich beileibe, dass du nicht mit deinem Duenkel drein fallest" (Luther VI:873). Do they honor God who feel free to criticize Scripture and even to ridicule some of its statements? They are treating God like a cowherd.

God declares that His Word is perfect (Ps. 19:7), and when men ridicule "a religion of authority which assumes that God must reveal Himself to us in a way which admits of no possible mistake" (Strachan), they commit lese majesty. They doubt the truth of God's own declaration. They claim the right to disregard His instructions at their pleasure.

The Lord has established Holy Scripture as the sole authority in religion. "To the Law and to the Testimony!" (Is. 8:20.) There is no appeal from Scripture to a higher court. This is the fundamental law in the Christian land. Luther bowed to this law. "In Holy Scripture we must find the judgment as to whether a certain teaching is right or wrong. . . . When you have a decision of Scripture, you need not look for any further decision" (III:503). Walther bowed to this law. "When we have found what Scripture teaches on any point, we must say: Now the matter is settled; I shall not listen when men start their 'but's' and 'however's'; for me the discussion is closed. Holy Scripture is the Alpha and Omega of all saving truth. There is no appeal from Scripture to a higher court" (*Proceedings Synodical Conference*, 1884, p. 49). And when men set out to establish a higher court and declare that "the community of believers is the ultimate authority, its moral and religious consciousness the last appeal" (Ladd), that "the final appeal is made to the Christian consciousness," not to a book "mechanically inspired" (Delk), that "faith and its testimony is the ultimate court of appeal" (Leckie), they are nullifying the Constitution of the Christian land. They are guilty of high treason.

"The doctrine of the virgin birth is Biblical." Our reverence and fear of the divine Majesty, who wrote the Bible, keeps us from casting doubt upon this Biblical doctrine. But there are men who, after declaring that "the doctrine of the virgin birth is Biblical" (see preceding article), proceed to inveigh against it, declaring that it cannot stand before the bar of their private judgment. Is that a *crimen laesae maiestatis divinae* or not?

It was the archrebel who said: "Yea, hath God said?" (Gen. 3:1.) He it is who instigates men to bring any statement of Scripture before the bar of their private judgment and to say: Yea, is this and that word of Scripture indeed the word of God?—Proclaiming this right of private judgment is stirring up rebellion

in the Christian land against the Sovereign Lord.⁴⁰⁾ It would depose the Lord and place—man upon the throne. These men are claiming an authority which belongs to the Lord alone. If we assume the right to judge Scripture, “we are necessarily claiming for ourselves the divine authority which we deny to Scripture. . . . In the Church human opinion is placed in the seat of authority” (Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, I, p. 68).⁴¹⁾ Do the moderns indeed

40) Men may deny that in judging Scripture they are committing the high crime of judging God, because in their judgment Scripture is not the Word of God. We shall have to repeat what we said before this: in denying or doubting that Scripture is God's own Word they are denying or doubting the truth of God's own declaration, God's declaration that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. The further plea that one cannot know that it is God's voice unless the matter has been submitted to some scientific or moral test cannot avail them. The proof that in any given instance God is speaking is the fact of His speaking. When God spoke to Adam, Adam did not say: How can I know that it is the Lord speaking? When He appeared to Moses, Moses did not ask the Lord to identify Himself. God is His own witness. And when men plead that before they can accept God's witness that the Holy Bible is His Word they must apply certain tests to that witness, they convict themselves of the *crimen laesae maiestatis divinae*; they ask God to get some creature to vouch for Him.

Another matter: every false teacher subjects Scripture to his private judgment and virtually sets himself above God. There are those among the errorists who sincerely and heartily abominate the wicked claim that Scripture occasionally errs and needs to be set right by men. But in order to justify their false teaching, they change the meaning of the pertinent Scripture texts and make them express their private ideas. The procedure is thus described by Luther: “Scripture is made to conform to their opinion and understanding and must submit to being bent and fitted to their notions.” (The entire passage reads: “Es ist ein schluepfrig Ding um die Ketzner, man kann sie schwerlich halten, und sind leichtfertig in goettlicher Schrift zu handeln. Das macht alles, dass sie ihr Gutduenkel in die Schrift tragen, und die Schrift muss sich nach ihrem Kopf und Verstande richten, beugen und lenken lassen. . . . Es ist mit Gottes Wort nicht zu scherzen. Kannst du es nicht verstehen, so zeuch den Hut vor ihm ab.” VI: 872 f.) But this is a species of the wrong use of private judgment. These men say: Scripture cannot, in our judgment, mean what the plain words say. But that is making man the judge of Scripture. It is a *crimen laesae maiestatis divinae*. It is telling God that He cannot express Himself clearly. And it is tampering with the sacrosanct words of the Sublime Majesty.

41) The entire statement reads: “Here it is *aut—aut*. Either we receive the Scripture as the very Word of God, and, taking our doctrine from Scripture, the sole source and norm of theology, teach *doctrinam divinam*, or we deny that Scripture is the infallible Word of God, distinguish in it between truth and error, and teach out of our own ego ‘the visions of our own heart.’ The divine authority which we deny to Scripture we are necessarily claiming for ourselves, our own human mind. We are adrift on the sea of subjectivism. In the Church human opinion is placed in the seat of authority. Our theology is no longer theocentric. It has become anthropocentric. . . . When modern theologians designate the use of Scripture as source and norm of the Christian doctrine as ‘intellectualism,’ as ‘letter-worship,’ etc., and speak of a ‘paper Pope,’ and make instead of Scripture the ‘experience’ of the theologian the source and norm of the Christian doctrine, their aim is—consciously or unconsciously or semiconsciously—to establish in God's Church the

make man the authority in religion, his authority overruling that of Scripture? They say so themselves. Schleiermacher demands that "the religious consciousness retain its autonomy" and remain "the controlling principle." (See preceding article.) R. H. Strachan declares for "the autonomy of the individual personality" (*The Authority of Christian Experience*, p. 19). John Oman says: "Christ's appeal was never in the last resort to Scripture, but to the hearts of living men. . . . He encourages His disciples to rise above the rule of authorities and to investigate till each is his own authority" (*Vision and Authority*, pp. 103, 188). And D. E. Adams, a Congregationalist minister, wrote in the *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1926: "The final basis of religious authority for you is yourself, your mind working on all that has come down in the religious tradition of Christianity, and selecting and making your own those things which satisfy the requirements of your intelligence, of your moral judgment, of your spiritual hunger. . . . The basis of religious society is shifting from the Bible to the individual. . . . We have come to the point where each man must decide for himself, in the light of his own best knowledge and experience, what there is in that Book, what there is in the Church, what there is in the Christian faith, that is valid for him, in the light of science, in the light of his own best moral judgment, in the light of that little spark of the divine which God has lighted in his soul." (See C. G. Trumbull, *Prophecy's Light on Today*, p. 92.) Walther was certainly not misrepresenting these men when he said: "The Bible is nearly everywhere treated like the fables of Aesop. When you begin later to compare the old with the modern theologians, you will see that I have not exaggerated. Science has been placed on the throne, and theology is made to sit at its feet and await the orders of philosophy" (*Law and Gospel*, p. 235). The moderns are indeed making man and his religious notions the final authority, whose approval Scripture must await before it can become authoritative.

But since God has invested Scripture with His own authority, these men are committing lese majesty. They are setting themselves above God. "Abgoettischer, verleugneter Christ" is the

product of their own spirit as the supreme authority. The divine authority that they deny to Scripture is actually granted to the ego of the theologians. What Luther said of the Pope and his discrediting of Scripture applies here, too: "They are saying this thing only to lead us away from Scripture and to make themselves our masters, in order that we might believe their dream sermons" (V:334 f).—A remark by the way: When the moderns use the disparaging term "paper Pope," they indicate that they will submit to no kind of pope. That is fine. But let them ponder what Luther somewhere said: "I am more afraid of my own heart than of the Pope and all his cardinals. I have within me the great pope—Self."

term Luther applies in this connection (XVII:2213). E. Brunner describes the situation thus: "The modern man wants to have a God; but he wants a God who speaks to him privately and who speaks to him not from without but only from within, so that it is possible to identify God and self. He does not want God as authority but as immanent principle, a God who is the same as the innermost depths of the ego. That is the reason why the Bible is so much disliked. . . . The real breakdown of Biblical faith in our modern time is not caused by science, but by modern philosophy; by the fact that the modern man does not want to acknowledge any authority outside of himself" (*The Word and The World*, pp. 91, 105). The situation calls for the sharp language Dr. Pieper uses: "Accordingly modern theology regards as imperative the flight out of Scripture into the 'pious self-consciousness of the theologizing subject.' Final result: all theologians who practice theology in this manner have actually become as God, yes, superior to God, for they even know what of God's Word is good and what is evil. It is of a piece with what happened when Satan practiced his first deception" (*op. cit.*, I, p. 663).

A word on the pride and presumption of the spirit which dares to exercise authority over Scripture. It is a small matter that these men look with contempt on the old theologians who were content to sit as catechumens and pupils at the feet of the Prophets and Apostles; in those days, they say, theology was in its infancy — we have attained the stature of "full-grown men." (See preceding article.) But it is not a small matter when men pretend to a better knowledge of secular and religious matters than Jesus had.⁴²⁾

42) R. H. Strachan: "The demand even for an infallible Christ, in the sense that He reveals to us a special body of truth beyond the reach of inquiry or intellectual reconstruction . . . is simply to deny that the idea of evolution is applicable to the Christian faith. It is to deny the right of free enquiry" (*op. cit.*, p. 199). Edwin Lewis: "The apocalyptic view of things, which became so important a part of late Jewish and early Christian thought, involves both an angelology and a demonology. . . . Jesus Himself accepted this view along with His acceptance of much else of the thought of his time" (*A New Heaven and a New Earth*, p. 91 f.). H. E. Fosdick: "The Master never faced in His own experience a national problem such as Belgium met when the Prussians crossed the border. . . . The fact is that Jesus did not directly face our modern question about war; they were not His problems, and to press a legalistic interpretation of special texts as though they were, is a misuse of the Gospel." (Quoted in *The Christian Century*, Dec. 6, 1936.) A. C. Knudson, in *The Principles of Christian Ethics*, p. 158: "Jesus shared the apocalyptic hope of His day, and in not a few instances His moral judgment was no doubt colored by this fact. . . . He spoke and acted as a man of His own day, and this makes it impossible for us to accept either His teaching or His example as an infallible guide in dealing with the concrete problems of our time." C. H. Dodd: "We need not doubt that Jesus as He is represented shared the views of His contemporaries regarding the authorship of books in the Old Testament or the phenomena of demon possession — views which we could not accept without violence to our

It is not a small matter when they boast that they can produce a better Bible than Jesus gave us through His Prophets and Apostles. It is Luciferian pride when men say that "the word of Revelation" is acceptable only after it has passed "the test of the common religious conscience" and that "when we obey this word, we are obeying *our own higher selves*" (J. H. Leckie, *Authority in Religion*, pp. 127, 131). When men refuse to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ and consent not to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is because they are puffed up with the self-conceit of Satan (2 Cor. 10:5; 11:3; 1 Tim. 6:3 f.). Speaking of "the enthusiasts, *i. e.*, spirits who boast that they have the Spirit without and before the Word and accordingly judge Scripture or the spoken Word and explain and stretch it at their pleasure," the Smalcald Articles say: "All this is the old devil and old serpent, who also converted Adam and Eve into enthusiasts and led them from the outward Word of God to spiritualizing and self-conceit" (*Triglotta*, p. 495).⁴³ I. M. Haldeman describes the Luciferian self-conceit thus: "Modernism teaches that the Bible is a framework of shifting thought forms. . . . Here and there in the book are evidences, not that the truth came down from God to man, but that man awoke to the truth in himself. . . . To think of confining a man to a book of unequal values as the only source of contact with, and knowledge of, God is too childish a concept for the twentieth century. The truth is (according to Modernism) man of today has altogether outgrown the Bible. It may have done for the infant state of the human mind, but to put the rising generation under its clamps and chains would be to restrict the mental growth of the human race, shrivel the future page of history to the record of pigmies and a backward

sense of truth" (*The Authority of the Bible*, p. 237). Fr. Baumgaertel: "We know more concerning the origin of the Scriptures of Israel than the Jewish scribes and Jesus, who got the knowledge of these matters from them." (See *Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung*, Nov. 12, 1926.) — "We are impressed with the fact," the *Watchman-Examiner* would say (see preceding article), that the attitude of these men is "never that of humility"; they dare to assume the "pontifical" attitude even towards Jesus.

43) H. Sasse: "Schleiermacher: 'Every sacred Scripture is but a mausoleum of religion. . . . He does not have religion who believes in a sacred Scripture, but rather he who does not need one and could make one if he so desired.' This whole religion of modern culture (which already existed at that time in the form of the 'Enthusiasts') is rejected in the Augsburg Confession. Luther himself, in his own inimitable fashion, made the rejection even clearer. It sounds as if he had Schleiermacher's *Speeches* and all the textbooks of the philosophy of religion which have appeared since then, together with the greater part of recent German 'evangelical' theology, in mind when he wrote these words in the Smalcald Articles: 'All this is the old devil and old serpent, etc. . . . Whatever without the Word and Sacraments is extolled as Spirit is the devil himself.'" (*Here We Stand*, p. 46).

sweep of all the higher possibilities that lie in man. . . . If the Bible be accepted at all, it can be only as it comes under and responds to the imperial consciousness and experience in man" (*A King's Penknife*, p. 107 ff.). And James Bannerman sizes these men up correctly when he says: "The modern theologian comes to the Bible and sits over its contents in the attitude of a judge who is to decide for himself what in it is true and worthy to be believed and what is false and deserving to be corrected; not in the attitude of the disciple, who, within the limits of the inspired record, feels himself at Jesus' feet to receive every word that cometh out of His mouth. The assurance that the Bible is the Word of God, and not simply containing it in more or less of its human language, is one fitted to solemnize the soul with a holy fear and a devout submission to its declarations as the very utterances of God. The assurance, on the contrary, that the truths of revelation are mingled, in a manner unknown and indeterminate, with the defects of the record, is one which reverses the attitude and brings man as a master to sit in judgment on the Bible as summoned to his bar and bound to render up to him a confession of its errors and not a declaration of its one and authoritative truth." (See B. Manly, *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration*, p. 16.)⁴⁴

44) It might be well to emphasize once more that the bar to which these men summon Scripture is the bar of their reason. Many of them say so in so many words. Thus F. C. Grant: "The Christian religion does not require anyone to go contrary to his own experience, i. e., not contrary to what in popular language is called 'reason,' or the conclusions we draw, the outlook we derive, from our experience. This has ever been God's way with man; else what was 'reason' for, which God implanted in us as a guide through the mazes of conflicting sense impressions and of opinions? . . . The argument: 'Holy Scripture is the infallible record of divine Revelation' is antiquated" (*The Living Church*, Nov. 11, 1933). O. L. Joseph: "If we are to escape the pitfalls of barren intellectualism and of prostrated emotionalism, we must recognize that reason and faith are the twin guides to truth. . . . The only course is to appeal to the testimony of evidence and to abide by a verdict that is approved by reason, conscience, and experience" (*Ringing Realities*, pp. 91, 216). A. C. Knudson: There are four sources of the Christian belief: "The Bible, the Church, natural reason, and Christian experience" (*The Doctrine of God*, pp. 175, 187). And when W. T. Manning says: "The Anglican Churches stand firmly for the essential principles for which Protestantism has borne its witness, individual responsibility, the right and duty of private judgment, the rights of reason, and the supreme authority of truth" (*The Reunion of Christendom*, p. 220), he would have us form our judgment in consultation with "reason." Others, again, do not mention "reason" in this connection, but make "the Christian consciousness" the judge of Scripture. However, any thinking of man which is not created and guided by Scripture is swayed and directed by natural reason. Dr. S. G. Craig well says: "By Christian consciousness is meant that we cannot be under obligation to accept anything in religion that is not real to this high tribunal, before which all cases in question must be brought. . . . Those who insist that the Christian consciousness, which is another phrase for the human reason, is the final court, do not seem to see that this is *veneered rationalism*, pure and

Here are "the very utterances of God"! And in Satanic impudence and self-conceit men treat them like the fables of Aesop, treat them as though a swineherd had spoken them.

What about the claim that the sacred gift of Christian liberty gives men the right to sit in judgment on Scripture? The moderns call upon men to break the shackles of the absolute authority of Holy Scripture, of "the doctrine of Bible Inerrancy and Plenary Inspiration . . . which exacts the submission of a slave" (J. H. Leckie; see preceding article). J. Oman will not "have doctrines drawn from Holy Writ like legal decisions from the Statute Book," for "this enslaving authority over man's mind and will Christ ever shunned" (*op. cit.*, pp. 126, 182). R. H. Strachan wants to rid the Church of "the slave mentality" which is produced by the idea of an "infallible Book" and declares: "The authority of which we are in quest clearly must be an authority which does not destroy our personal freedom" (*op. cit.*, pp. 16, 19). F. T. Woods will accept "the Bible as the rule of faith," as one of "the essentials of Protestantism," but insists also on these other essentials: "The right of private judgment within reasonable limits and freedom for Christian thought and inquiry." (See *The Reunion of Christendom*, p. 119.) And M. G. G. Sherer puts it into very strong language: "Christian liberty knows how to distinguish between Scripture and Scripture, between the shell and the content, between the chaff and the wheat, between the letter and the spirit. . . . Christian liberty does not fall into the sin of bibliolatry" (*Christian Liberty and Christian Unity*, p. 81). In the sacred name of Christian liberty these men inveigh against the "constraint of the free spirit of investigation." With Harnack they laud Luther who "protested against the authority of the letter of the Bible . . . who was free from every sort of bondage to the letter" (*What Is Chris-*

simple, and so must ultimately lead to the same goal" (*The Presbyterian*, Oct. 11, 1928). Dr. Pieper passes the same judgment: "When modern theologians make the 'regenerate ego' the principle of Christian knowledge and at the same time refuse to accept Scripture as the Word of God and the sole source and norm of theology, they are in reality placing the *natural* ego of man, the flesh, upon the seat of authority in the Church. It is plain, common *rationalism* masquerading as Christianity" (*op. cit.*, I, p. 242). "The man who appeals to conscience alone is in reality appealing to human reason" (*The Pastor's Monthly*, 1935, January, p. 42).

And now what inspires this rationalistic attitude? B. Manly: "It ministers to the pride of reason" (*op. cit.*, p. 16). Rationalism, in any of its forms, is the incarnation of the Luciferian pride. Hear the old rationalist Loeffler: "Our reason is manifestly God in us!" Hear President McGiffert of Union Theological Seminary: "Christ is essentially no more divine than we are!" (See C. G. Trumbull, *op. cit.*, p. 89.) And all rationalists pay—either consciously or unconsciously or semiconsciously—the same tribute to reason. It is "the proud, supercilious reason (hoffaertige ueberwitzige Vernunft)," "Satan's paramour" (Luther, X:1007; XX:232), that entices men to set their private judgment above the judgment of Scripture.

tianity? pp. 298, 312), and take up the campaign song of the old rationalists: "Hoert, ihr Herren, und lasst Euch sagen! Der Geist ist nicht mehr in Fesseln geschlagen. Gedenket an Luther, den Ehrenmann, der solche Freiheit Euch wiedergewann" (*Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenzeitung*, 19. Sept. 1930).

Is that Christian liberty? Did Christ die on the cross to gain for us the liberty to deal with His Bible as with a human book? Does Christ who said: "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35) give us "the liberty which knows how to distinguish between Scripture and Scripture, between the chaff and the wheat"? Do not attempt to hide the high crime of violating Christ's holy Book behind the holy name of Christian liberty.

True, God would have men enjoy religious liberty. The State is doing the right thing when it grants liberty of conscience, permitting the citizens to think and teach what they please on religious questions. God would have men jealously guard this right. Voltaire took the right position when he said: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." And on this point Luther is in hearty accord with Voltaire. "The civil government does not undertake to govern men's consciences; it deals only with temporal goods" (XIX:823). "Still I should not like to have them [the heavenly prophets] put in prison. . . . See also that our prince does not stain his hands with the blood of these new prophets." (XV:2606). "Secular magistrates must not interpose any prohibition as to what anyone wishes to teach or believe, be it Gospel or falsehood; it is enough that they forbid the teaching of revolt and disturbances" (XVI:50). But will any man argue that because the State grants—and should grant—liberty of conscience, God, too, has no authority over the conscience, but must grant men the right to accept and reject as much of the Bible as they choose? What is a virtue in the State becomes a crime when practiced in the Church.

But if God wants the State to respect the conscience and safeguard the rights of free men, will He Himself force the conscience and exact from His sons the obedience of slaves? The moderns say that God would not do that. And we say the same. The moderns make much of "personal freedom." So do we. So does God. Therefore God restores in His children the personal freedom that was lost through the Fall. When the moderns say that men who recognize the absolute authority of Scripture and feel bound by every word of it cannot enjoy personal freedom, they do not know the mind of the man who has come under the benign influence of the Word. The Word has won his heart, and he gives his joyous assent to it. At first he rebelled against the Word, but God changed the unwilling heart into a willing heart,

and he obeys the Word willingly, freely, gladly.⁴⁵⁾ When Scripture has convinced a man that it is God's Word, he no longer asks: Must I accept these statements? Hearing God speak in Scripture, his heart leaps for joy, and he treasures every single Scripture declaration. The word: "I am bound. I cannot escape it. The text stands there too mightily" (Luther XV:2050) is not the enforced acquiescence of a cringing slave, but the glad testimony of the child who loves and reveres his heavenly Father. Samuel's declaration: "Speak, for Thy servant heareth," was not exacted by force and compulsion, but expressed the fullest personal freedom. Here is Christian liberty! The "servants," "bond servants," "slaves" of God are God's freedmen, who have broken the dominion of their self-willed, rebellious flesh and its antagonism to God's Word; who have acquired the faculty of thinking divine thoughts and thank God that He has revealed His glorious thoughts to them in Holy Scripture; and who gladly make God's thoughts and words their own.⁴⁶⁾ Strachan wants an "authority which does not destroy our personal freedom," which leaves men free to accept as much of Scripture as they please. We thank God that in Holy Scripture He has given us an authority which restores our personal freedom.

What, then, about the claim that the sacred right of liberty

45) Pieper: "God indeed demands that man subject his intellect and will to God, but God brings this about by *illuminating*, through the power of the Holy Ghost in His Word, the intellect and so *changing* the will of man that from being unwilling he becomes willing (*ex nolente volens*)." "The advocates of Verbal Inspiration do not set up Scripture as a 'paper Pope,' demanding external subjection without inner conviction, but Scripture is to them a book which — just because it is God's own Word — itself works faith and *eo ipso* willing and joyous acceptance through the operation of the Holy Spirit inherent in it (*op. cit.*, I, p. 365; III, p. 83).

46) The moderns like to say that those who are bound by the Word of God do not do any thinking. *The Christian Century*, Feb. 22, 1933, makes this nasty slur: "A statement sent out by the Methodist board of education says that in the future the topics for use in the Epworth League — the Methodist young people's society — will not seek to raise questions but to give 'affirmations of faith with an increased biblical emphasis.' Of course, what this means in plain words is that the Methodists want to accustom their young people to swallowing without question what is handed out to them in the way of religious instruction. . . . Albert Schweitzer has a great passage in his new autobiography in which he says that the sin which lies at the basis of the disintegration of modern life is the sin of refusing to think; that civilization is being destroyed by the pressure to make all minds alike. It is evidently a lucky thing for Schweitzer that he is not trying to present his views to the Methodist young people's board of education." The truth of the matter is, of course, that the only worth-while thinking is being done by those who think God's thoughts after Him. The young people who study 2 Tim. 3:16 do a lot of thinking. They are kept busy suppressing the evil thoughts that this passage cannot be God's Word and, having grasped the truth that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, their hearts are leaping with thoughts of wonderment and thanksgiving.

gives men the right to sit in judgment on Scripture? It is the voice of rebellion against God. It asks men to free themselves of the delusion that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. It sounds the slogan: All Scripture is subject to man's private judgment! And it is not only the agnostic Ingersoll who claimed the right to sit in judgment on Scripture. He said: "It is a question, first, of intellectual liberty and, after that, a question to be settled at the bar of human reason" (*Lectures*, p. 382). And now leaders in the Christian Church are saying the same thing! And it is not only the Modernist H. E. Fosdick who rails at "the naive acceptance of the Bible as of equal credibility in all its parts because mechanically inerrant" (*The Modern Use of the Bible*, p. 273; see also pp. 30, 236). Conservative theologians speak the same language: "Christian liberty knows how to distinguish between Scripture and Scripture, between the chaff and the wheat."

A Church that assumes the right to judge Holy Scripture is in rebellion against the Lord of the Church. "A congregation which refuses to submit to the clear statements of Holy Scripture is a synagogue of Satan, Rev. 3:9" (Walther, *Rechte Gestalt*, § 16).

2. *The exercise of the illegitimate right of private judgment is productive of false teaching.* This principle is the fecund mother of a great brood of heresies. In fact, every heresy and every doctrinal aberration, be it great or small, is the direct result of man's placing his private judgment above Scripture. "This is the beginning, middle, and end of all errors: men forsake the simple words of God; they feel that reason must have her say in the divine mysteries and set matters aright; just as Paul says of Eve, 2 Cor. 11:3, that Satan led her from the simplicity of God's Word into his subtlety" (Luther, XIX:1390). It cannot be otherwise; only when men continue in the words of Jesus shall they have the knowledge of the truth, John 8:31 f.; as soon as men follow their own thoughts, they fall into error. "Every human thought of divine things is an error" (Luther, XIX:1298). In every case that a man has changed Scripture to suit his own ideas he has produced a wicked error. And he will not stop at one error. If he has the right to modify one teaching of Scripture, what is to prevent him from casting overboard all of its teachings, including the very fundamentals of Christianity? Where did Ritschl stop after he had granted himself the right of "free investigation"? O. L. Joseph pronounces "the verdict approved by reason, conscience, and experience" that Jesus was a mere man ("The Jewish Christians elevated Jesus to the rank of equality with God, without in the least feeling that they weakened the unity of the divine personality. The Gentile Christians were nurtured in pagan polytheism, but with a new emphasis they exalted Jesus to the highest

position of deity. . . . Prayers were more frequently offered to Him than to God.") and that His work was "to focus attention on the culture of character and the performance of duty" (*op. cit.*, pp. 216, 174). The statement of the Episcopalian B. I. Bell that "it is a fundamental, indeed the basic, principle of Protestantism [as distinguished from Anglicanism] that each individual Christian's own soul is the first, last, and sufficient guide and authoritative judge about truth or falsity, wisdom or lack of wisdom, in matters of faith and morals" (see preceding article), continues: "It is true that at the time of the Reformation this principle of Protestantism did not at once appear in full flower. . . . So it went on, until nowadays every clear-thinking Protestant understands that he individually can and ought to follow his own inner spirit, accepting only those things as true and binding which happen to appeal to him. And so, in the year 1933, no less a person than the Rev. Dr. Carl S. Patton, moderator of the Congregational National Council, can say, and did say, as a matter of course, in an address delivered at the 125th anniversary of the foundation of Andover Seminary, that there are only two planks left in the creed of the intelligent and modern American Protestant: first, that there is some sort of a God; second, that Jesus, while not God, is man at man's best and therefore probably indeed very much like God. On everything else there is disagreement; and to all else, in the thinking of most Protestant theologians, there is considerable indifference. I, for one, respect Dr. Patton for saying that. It is the truth about Protestantism that he is telling." (See *The Christian Century*, Oct. 4, 1933.) Appealing to the right of private judgment, the apostate Protestants deny the chief truths of Christianity. Other men, appealing to the same right, denounce all religious thinking as an aberration of the human mind. We read in Clayton's book: "The path from Catholicism to private judgment . . . led on to skepticism and thence to the ultimate atheism so widespread and active in our day" (p. XV f.). Indeed, the atheist proclaims: There is no sort of God. And on the basis of the right of private judgment he is prepared to defend his article against any man.⁴⁷⁾ — A partial list of the aberrations and heresies

47) "The Unitarians are commonly regarded as carrying to the furthest point the doctrine of private judgment and the free conscience." Well, the Freethinkers carry it still farther. Ingersoll brought all questions to "the bar of human reason" and got a verdict in favor of agnosticism. Now, it would be interesting to witness a debate between the Unitarians, defending their article that there is some sort of God, and the spokesman for the National Infidel Society, the American Secular Union, and the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, defending the thesis that there is no God. Both appeal to reason. The debate would be interminable. And if the Unitarians appealed to the voice of conscience, the Freethinker would argue that

introduced into the Church by the theologians, liberal and conservative, who operate with the false right of private judgment, is given in *Reason or Revelation?* pp. 30 ff.; 61 f. The "religious consciousness of man" which is not created and controlled by Holy Scripture is capable only of producing perversions of the truth, and it has produced perversions of the worst kind.⁴⁸⁾

The "conservatives" deny *some* of the teachings of the Bible; the liberals, by the same right of private judgment, deny *most* of them. One naturally asks: What, then, draws the line between the conservatives and the liberals? We might say that it is only by accident that Hofman retained more Christian teachings than Ritschl. Let us rather say that it is only by the grace of God that a theologian who claims the right to reject the Vicarious Atonement does not claim the right to reject the deity of Christ. It is only God's wonderful grace that keeps him from applying the arrogated right of private judgment at all points. Left to himself, he would deny every teaching of Scripture.⁴⁹⁾ — "Alle Ketzerei ist daher ge-

"conscience" is a delusion, the product of priestcraft, etc., etc. Again the debate would be interminable. The Unitarian might, indeed, have a little the best of the argument, but the debate would never be conclusive. How would a debate between the "conservative" who stands for the right of private judgment and the Unitarian run? The conservative would have no show at all. The Unitarian would tell him: You change the Scripture teaching on the vicarious atonement because of the judgment of your "regenerate reason," your "Christian self-consciousness," etc.; why should I not change the Scripture teaching on the deity of Jesus and the Trinity because of my regenerate reason and Christian self-consciousness? The conservative would have no answer. The right-of-private-judgment conservatives are poor defenders of the Christian faith.

48) H. Kraemer: "In the domain of the religious consciousness man's possibilities and abilities shine in the lofty religions and the ethical systems that he has produced and tried to live by. The non-Christian world in the past and the present offers many illustrious examples." This statement is not correct, but note what follows: "His sin and his subjection to evil and to satanic forces, however, corrupt all his creations and achievements, even the sublimest, in the most vicious way. The mystic, who triumphantly realizes his essential oneness with God or the Divine, knowing himself in serene equanimity the supreme master of the universe and of destiny, and who by his marvelous feats of moral self-restraint and spiritual self-discipline offers a fascinating example of splendid humanity, commits in this sublime way the root sin of mankind, 'to be like God' (Gen. 3:5). . . . Hence the universal religious consciousness of man has everywhere produced also the most abhorrent and degrading filth that perverted human imagination and lust can beget. . . . The universal religious consciousness of man itself nowhere speaks this clear language (of "Biblical realism, sin, guilt, lostness, past recovery except by God Himself"), because it is confused and blinded by its inherent disharmony" (*The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, p. 113).

49) Concerning F. H. R. Frank's theology, which makes the Christian consciousness the source and norm of doctrine, Dr. Stoeckhardt says: "It is indeed a miracle that Frank's mill of reason did not grind all Christian dogmas to pieces, that Frank retains certain elements of the

flossen und ihren Ursprung gehabt, dass die Vernunft will die Heilige Schrift meistern und ueberkugeln" (Luther, VII:989).

All the world knows what havoc the misuse of private judgment has wrought in the field of doctrine. The liberals know it only too well. Recall the statement of the *Christian Century*, Nov. 30, 1938: "If the right of private judgment is granted, differences of opinion are inevitable. The truth is that Protestantism has always been a little fearful of the right of private judgment and has handled that principle gingerly and with grave doubts as to its workability." Lecky reports: "Reformed theology has found it true that private judgment is a dangerous instrument" (*op. cit.*, p. 47). The Catholics, too, know it. Clayton points it out again and again. And *America*, April 20, 1940, speaks of it thus: "Private judgment has failed. . . . It has resulted in the existence of countless warring and contradictory 'churches'. . . . To what a disastrous extent private judgment has watered down the doctrinal content of the Church of England was brought out graphically by the famous Report on Doctrine, which, after having been in process of preparation for fifteen years, was finally formulated in January, 1938. On the question whether the Virgin Birth is fact or myth, whether or not Our Lord's tomb was empty on Easter Day, and whether the Gospel miracles should be taken as history or imagery, there was such a conflict of opinion that the report did not even suggest an answer. The Report states: ' . . . Our greatest concern is with the liberty claimed by some accredited teachers to treat as open questions articles of faith universally received by the Church, a liberty carried to such a degree of license as to amount in certain cases to virtual denial of the Godhead of our Lord.' One would suppose that the results of four centuries of tug-of-war with the Bible, which has left only shreds of truth among the 'churches,' would have convinced those who hold the theory of private judgment of its absolute unworkability."⁵⁰ — What do the Neo-Protestants say to this indictment?

Christian truth. But for that his system is not responsible. It is due to an inconsistency. The danger always remains that future disciples of the master may apply the principles of his system consistently and do away with the entire revealed truth" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1896, p. 74).

50) The cure proposed by the Catholics is as bad as, or worse than, the ill. *America* says: "In this world crisis it is the most evident duty of all advocates of private judgment to examine, without prejudice, the only possible alternative: the acceptance of infallible authority. . . . The remedy is the acceptance of the authority of the Pope." An article headed "A Wishful Protestant Looks at Catholicism," in the February 25, 1939, issue of *America*, says: "To the Protestant, every man's conscience is a sure guide for a life of virtue, but the most elementary psychology teaches that conscience is little more than a blend of desire plus the influence of the past. The Catholic need rely upon nothing within his own highly fallible spirit, but can rest his Faith upon the Church.

It does not move them deeply. In a manner they deplore this divergence of doctrine within the visible Church. For certain reasons they would like to have the churches reach some kind of unity. But the fact that all kinds of errors and heresies exist in the visible Church does not move them deeply. They are indifferent as regards doctrine. It is all too true what Canon Bell's article says: "To all else, in the thinking of most Protestant theologians, there is considerable indifference." There is much truth in what *America* says in the issue of April 20, 1940: "That this theory of private judgment is working toward the destruction of Christianity among non-Catholic Christians is evident to anyone who observes the spirit of indifference to all belief growing among Protestants. No [?] Protestant is startled when a man like Dr. Charles M. Sheldon, author of the best seller *In His Steps* states: 'Religion, as I have understood it, is simply putting the teachings of Christ to work in every part of life. . . . It is not greatly concerned any more with theological and doctrinal definitions.'" "I would be glad," said the Federal Council president Cadman, "to see a holiday given to all theological speculation for fifty years." "'A plague on all your doctrines,'" says Edwin Lewis, "is on occasion an understandable enough exclamation," and he speaks of "the Church's debt to heresy." (See *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, 1943, p. 396.) And *The Christian Century*, March 2, 1938, says: "No issue between the Churches can now be settled by the quotation of a biblical text, as our fathers used to assume. No issue will be settled by reference to an authoritarian standard, whether doctrinal or ecclesiastical. These rigidities of the past have given way to criteria which are vital and realistic, and therefore flexible and capable of a richer inclusiveness. We approach the old subjects of controversy in a new intellectual mood." These indifferentists have no horror of false doctrine. "Heresy" is for them an obsolete term. What does it matter, they say, if certain teachings are contrary to Scripture? They have little awe of Scripture and cannot understand why Luther should cry out: "O ye theologians, what are you doing? Think ye that it is a trifling

If the Protestant's conscience seems to tell him something that is at variance with what he hears in the Church, conscience is presumed to be right. The Protestant, then, cannot know the security of reliance upon some powers, some institution older, stronger than himself. . . . The priest need not rely upon his own authority, his own ingenuity. The answers to all questions have been accumulating for two thousand years, and he knows where to find them." This cure kills. It means the *sacrificium intellectus et conscientiae*. And adherence to the Pope does not deliver from the evils consequent upon man's setting his private judgment above Scripture. Recall Luther's word: "Mache nicht Artikel des Glaubens aus deinen Gedanken, wie der Greuel zu Rom tut" (XV: 1565).—Canon B. I. Bell's cure—place the Church in the seat of authority—is of the same nature as the Roman-Catholic cure.

matter when the sublime Majesty forbids you to teach things that do not proceed from the mouth of the Lord and are something else than God's Word?" Those are Lutheran scruples, they say.

But this indifference is the natural result of the false right of private judgment. While Luther is horrified when men dare to sweep aside any statement of Scripture, the modern Protestant declares: These men have a perfect right to do what they are doing; they are exercising their God-given right to set their private judgment against Scripture; you must not treat them as heretics.

We certainly did not say too much when we called this principle the fecund mother of heresies. We will add that as a good mother it does not disown but fosters and fondles them.

Examine, finally, the following pronouncement, delivered at the inauguration of S. S. Schmucker as professor at Gettysburg in 1826: "Hence, I charge you to exert yourself in convincing our students that the Augsburg Confession is a safe directory to determine upon matters of faith declared in the Lamb's Book. To a difference of opinion upon subjects of minor importance, by which different denominations of Christians have been brought into existence, we have no objections, provided the spirit of the Christ prevails. The visible Church is rather beautiful by such differences, as is a garden by flowers of variegated colors. But the different genera and species should be preserved, according to their peculiar nature. The right of private judgment Luther contended for, and hence the utmost liberality towards others should ever characterize the pastor of the Lutheran Church." (See *The Pastor's Monthly*, 1931, p. 268.) The argument for unionism is presented here in *optima forma*. Doctrinal differences of minor importance should not be divisive of church fellowship. The Lutherans teach the *gratia universalis*, and the Calvinists deny it; the Lutherans teach the *sola gratia*, and the Semipelagian, Arminian, synergistic churches, such as the Catholics and Methodists and others, deny it. But we should have no objections to these differences. For there is the right of private judgment! The Methodist is as much entitled to his opinion as is the Lutheran. Hence the Lutheran must practice the utmost liberality towards those of different faiths. — To be sure, if the right of private judgment in doctrinal matters is granted, the argument of the unionist is unassailable. — But is not every single Scripture teaching binding upon every Christian? Orrin G. Judd answers: "Private interpretation of the Scriptures necessarily involves the possibility of disagreement on some points that are not fundamental." (See *The Watchman-Examiner*, Dec. 9, 1943.) The argument is: What Scripture says on certain non-fundamental points — and "non-

fundamentals," as used by the unionists, covers a wide territory — is subject to private interpretation, and since your private interpretation cannot count for more than another man's private interpretation, divergent teaching on these points is not divisive of church fellowship. — To be sure, if the right of private interpretation is granted, the argument of the unionist is unassailable. No man's "interpretation" of Scripture is binding upon any other man. Unionism — the toleration of divergent teachings in the Church — thus has plain sailing.

It does encounter some difficulties, of course. *The Christian Century* of March 2, 1938, says: "We approach the old subjects of controversy in a new intellectual mood. True, this mood leads many to expect decisive solutions too hastily and easily, like the enthusiastic layman who asked his pastor on the latter's return from Edinburgh last summer: 'Did the churches agree to unite?' It is well that we should be cautioned against such superficial optimism." One of the things that prevent a speedy union on the unionistic basis is human prejudice. Every man likes his own notions better than those of the other man. And it takes time to overcome this prejudice. Therefore the caution against optimism. — But the unionist is not disheartened. He knows that this prejudice can be softened down. He is willing to wait, since he has gained the main point: the one thing that would effectually stop the unionistic advance has been removed; the principle that every Scripture statement and teaching is binding has broken down.

Is the fraudulent right of private judgment the fecund mother and tender nurse of error and heresy? The situation obtaining in the unionistic church bodies gives the answer.

3. *There can be no certainty of doctrine and no assurance of faith* where men operate with the illicit right of private judgment. The Church has fallen upon evil days. Writing in *The Presbyterian*, Dr. C. E. Macartney says: "Luther was a man sent of God, a world shaker, such as makes his appearance only a few times in the history of the world. The two great doctrines which he re-discovered and loosed upon the world were, first of all, the Scriptures as the final authority for the Christians and, second, justification by faith alone. . . . Today the Protestant Church stands in sore need of a re-emphasis and rediscovery of those two great Reformation propositions. When Luther said, 'Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. So help me God,' he was taking his stand upon the Scriptures. But where does the Protestant Church today stand as to the Scriptures? Does it stand anywhere? And when the authority of the Scriptures is gone, all we have is a vague 'I think so.' Human wisdom and speculation is a poor substitute for a 'Thus saith the Lord.'". . . (See CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL

MONTHLY, 1934, p. 398.) Luther preached with divine assurance. It was given him to preach after the way prescribed by St. Peter: "If any many speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." 1 Pet. 4:11. He says: "A preacher should boldly declare with St. Paul and all the Apostles and Prophets: '*Haec dixit Dominus*, God Himself hath said this.' *Et iterum*, 'In this sermon I have been an apostle and prophet of Jesus Christ. Here it is not necessary, not even good, to ask for the forgiveness of sins. For it is God's Word, not mine, and so there can be no reason for His forgiving me; He can only confirm and praise what I have preached, saying: "Thou hast taught correctly, for I have spoken through thee, and the Word is Mine."'" Anyone who cannot say this of his preaching should quit preaching, for he must surely be lying and blaspheming God when he preaches" (XVII:1343). Knowing that Scripture is the Word of God, Luther stood on a firm rock, the "sure word of prophecy" (2 Pet. 1:19), and this objective certainty created in him subjective certainty. Refusing to deal with his own thoughts, feelings, and speculations, but making the thoughts and words of Scripture his own, there was in him divine assurance. "This confidence I have in God through Christ that my doctrine and teaching is truly God's Word" (XII:839).

The moderns cannot have this divine assurance. For them there is no objective certainty. They deny that the words of the Bible are the very words of God. The fact, therefore, that the Bible makes a certain statement is no proof of the truth of it. The truth of it must be established otherwise. For them it is true only after it has passed the test of their private judgment. 2 Pet. 1:19 reads in their revised Bible: "We have a most unsure word of prophecy." We cannot rely on this or that particular passage till certain tests have demonstrated to our satisfaction that it is really God's word or till certain changes we have made as to its meaning make it fit to be received as God's word; it is not the word of Scripture but our interpretation of it that counts. As Dr. Pieper puts it: "In the Church of the Pope questions of faith are not decided by the Word of God, but by the word of man; men fix the meaning of Scripture. And here modern theology walks precisely in the footsteps of Rome, holding that the articles of faith must not be drawn out of Scripture itself, but out of the so-called faith-consciousness. According to this theological method the human interpretation of Scripture is the decisive factor. . . . Dass es nicht sowohl auf die Schrift selbst als auf die Auslegung derselben ankommt, ist ein Satz, den nicht nur die Papstkirche bekennt und praktiziert, sondern ein Satz, der auch die ganze moderne Theologie beherrscht, ja, der selbst fuer manchen ein-

faeltigen Christen zunaechst einen Schein der Wahrheit hat" (*Vor-
traege*, p. 48 f.).

That means that the affirmation of the moderns is not: *Haec dixit Dominus*, but: *We say it*. The modern version of Augustine's axiom: "In ecclesia non valet: Hoc ego dico, hoc tu dicis, hoc ille dicit, sed: Haec dicit Dominus," reads: "In ecclesia valet: 'Hoc ego dico.'" People are asked to accept so much of Scripture as agrees with the "Christian consciousness," so much as has passed the censorship of private judgment.

And that means that the modern man cannot be absolutely certain of the truth of his preaching and his theology. All that he can offer in proof of it is his investigations, his feelings, his sense of the fitness of things — not God's declaration, but his own opinions. But all the world knows that the opinion of a mere human does not guarantee the truth of anything; a man may have the firmest conviction that he is right and still may be wrong. And so the man who relies upon his private judgment to fix the eternal truth can never be certain that he is absolutely right. His honesty will compel him to say: My judgment, based on my human understanding, investigation, and experimentation, is not the infallible judgment of God; I cannot say: *Haec dixit Dominus*. There are men who will at times declare that they have found the infallible Word of God hidden in the fallible word of Scripture, and are convinced that they can say: *Haec dixit Dominus*, and are ready to stake their life and salvation on this conviction. But in their sober moments they will confess that every judgment based on human reasoning and feeling is subject to doubt. Discussing "The Tests of Authority," a writer in *Christendom*, 1937, Summer, p. 433, says: "To give up either individual insight or group authority would be to renounce the high privilege of being human, for man has the unique dual capacity both to profit by the cumulative experience of the whole race and also to challenge boldly the authority of the whole past. The ability to make progress depends upon this dual functioning. We must recognize both demands, keeping up a tension which is helpful in both directions. It is especially important that the individual who finds himself in conflict with the authority of those who are worthy of respect keep courageously to the truth as he sees it, but he should do so in humility, and perhaps in sorrow, *well knowing that the chance of his being in the wrong is enormous.*" (Our italics.) The best that the modern preacher can say is: I think that I am telling the eternal truth; I am honestly convinced that I am speaking the Word of the Lord; but the only guaranty I can give is my human judgment. The man who stands on Scripture speaks in this wise: "I place over against all sentences of the fathers, men, angels, devils . . . solely

the Word of the eternal Majesty, the Gospel. . . . That is God's Word, not ours. Here I stand, here I stay, here I make my boast, here I triumph, here I defy the Papists, the Thomists, the Heinzists, Sophists, and all the gates of hell. God's Word is above all, the divine Majesty is on my side" (Luther XIX:337). The modern man, however, concludes his sermon and his theological essay with the affirmation: I guess I was right. This is the situation as portrayed by Dr. Macartney: "Those who have departed from faith in an infallible Bible have made desperate but utterly vain efforts to secure a suitable substitute and other standing ground. But as time goes by, the pathetic hopelessness of this effort is more manifest. Such catchwords as 'progressive revelation,' 'personal experience,' 'devotion to the truth,' etc., are one by one being cast into the discard. Modernism and Liberalism, by the confession of their own adherents, are terribly bankrupt, nothing but 'cracked cisterns,' into which men lower in vain their vessels for the water of life. There is no possible substitute for an inspired Bible. No one can preach with the power and influence of him who draws a sword bathed in heaven and who goes into the pulpit with a 'Thus saith the Lord' back of him. . . ." (Quoted in L. Boettner, *The Inspiration of the Scriptures*, p. 81.) The preacher who subjects Scripture to his private judgment finds himself in the terrible situation that he must tell his congregation at the close of the service: I gave you the best that was in me, but the chance of my being in the wrong is enormous.

Such a preacher should not be permitted to occupy a Christian pulpit. "He should quit preaching," said Luther. For he cannot create divine assurance in his hearers. They may think he is right, and they may think he is wrong. And if they are convinced that he is right, it is purely a human conviction. Dr. Bell's article calls attention to this point. "In consequence upon this principle (that in matters of religion there is and can be no authority save the authority resident in the individual soul of a Christian believer), every true, thoroughgoing Protestant minister is at liberty to believe anything, and teach anything, which he himself happens to think correct, and to disbelieve anything and fail to teach anything which he does not happen to like. When we listen to a Protestant minister preach, it is the minister himself who is the authority. It is one man talking on the basis of one man's understanding. But we Episcopalians are aware that it is unsafe to follow any one man. We know too much modern psychology to trust any individual very far. He may be mistaken. . . ." There can be no certainty of belief where the minister asks you to accept a certain teaching not because Scripture says so but because he says so. Nor will it do for you to say that you will not, of course,

accept any doctrine on another man's say-so, but that you accept it because it agrees with your own reason, research, and feeling. — Do not say that! Do not say that the other man may be mistaken but you yourself never. No, no, in matters of faith we need the assurance which only God's own Word can give. It is a desperate situation. We want to know, we want to be divinely sure of our faith. "Know" is the important word: men and women long to 'know,' not merely that belief in God is probable and reasonable, but to 'know' God Himself." Thus M. Coleman in *Faith Under Fire*, p. 8. We want to *know* that our Christian doctrine is God's own doctrine. But now this same Coleman tells his people: "So many people imagine that the Bible being the word of God means that God, as it were, wrote it Himself. . . . In the Bible we shall expect to find not only God's truth, which is always eternally true, but also man's sometimes erring ways of expressing truth" (p. 48). What is the result? The man who believes the Bible only after he himself has corrected it will never "know" the saving doctrine, know it with divine assurance. The moderns have created a desperate situation. "Religion without certainty is religion without strength." Thus J. H. Leckie. But what results when men, as Leckie advises them to do, find "the ideal organ of authority in religion in the 'religious consciousness' "? Let Leckie himself state the results: "There is much confusion and a great unrest. . . . Perhaps this state of uncertainty, of varied and doubtful answers, is a necessity of the time. It may be that the Church must even wander a while in the desert; it may be that the word of reconciliation cannot be spoken till the thought and research of this age have performed their perfect work . . ." (*op. cit.*, pp. 54, 64, 76, 81).

And where there is no certainty of doctrine, there is no assurance of faith, in fact, no faith at all, for faith is assurance. The assurance which the anxious sinner needs is given only through God's own word and declaration. His heart is at rest when the sweet Gospel promises and all the glorious teachings of the Bible come to him with a "Thus saith the Lord." If they had no better guaranty than the "I think so" of a poor human, they would be worthless for producing and sustaining faith. We cannot base our faith on the assurances of a mere man. "Nur Gottes Wort gibt Gewissheit. . . . Soweit Gottes Wort geht, so weit hat wahrer Glaube statt." ⁵¹⁾ John 3:16 is God's word, and when the modern

51) Walther's entire statement reads: "There is no appeal from Scripture to a higher court. . . . Any teaching that is not taken directly from God's Word can only create doubt. The Word of God alone produces certainty. The affirmations of reason are met by the doubts and denials of reason. — True faith can exist only in relation to God's Word. When men have no direct Word of God for their belief, there is not

or even the modernist employs this passage, the power to create and sustain faith operates. But when he, in discussing this passage, tells people that nobody knows whether it is really God's word, that certain investigations and tests are necessary to establish its trustworthiness, he is creating uncertainty, doubt, unbelief, and faith begins to waver. And his subsequent affirmation: I think it is God's word, cannot furnish the ground for faith. "Ohne die volle und ganze Autoritaet der Heiligen Schrift hat die Predigt keine zur glaeubigen Annahme noetigende Kraft."⁵² — The message of the outright modernist cannot produce and sustain faith. In the words of Macartney: "Modernism and Liberalism are nothing but 'cracked cisterns,' into which men lower in vain their vessels for the water of life. . . . No man can preach with the power and influence of him who goes into the pulpit with a 'Thus saith the Lord' back of him. . . . When man faces the overwhelming facts of sin, passion, pain, sorrow, death, and the beyond-death, the glib and easy phrases of current Modernism and flippant Liberalism are found to be nothing but a broken reed. Therefore he who preaches historic Christianity and takes his stand upon a divine revelation has, amid the storms and confusions and dark-

faith, but only illusion, which may, indeed, assume the form of fanatical conviction. . . . Divine assurance is produced by the Word alone" (*Proceedings, Synodical Conference, 1884, p. 49 f.*). "Walther says in his treatise *Die lutherische Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, p. 69: 'Modern Christianity is no longer satisfied to rest on God's bare Word. Men refuse to believe till they feel grace in their hearts. They want to base their faith on their experience [on their regenerate ego, the Christian consciousness]. But that is—mark it well!—making shipwreck of faith.'" (Pieper, *op. cit.*, III, p. 257.)

52) *Kirchenblatt*, 25. Maerz, 1944: "Die Untergrabung der Autoritaet der Heiligen Schrift liegt besonders in der ungluecklichen Redensart, dass in der Heiligen Schrift Gottes Wort sei; darnach ist es jedem ueberlassen, was er nun fuer Gottes Wort will gelten lassen. Die, welche damit umgehen, die Heilige Schrift von den sogenannten Vorstellungen und Anschauungen der Zeit, in der die heiligen Schriftsteller lebten, zu entkleiden, gehen oft so weit, dass eben nur das duerre Knochengerippe ihrer eigenen Ideen uebrigbleibt. Ohne die volle und ganze Autoritaet der Heiligen Schrift hat die Predigt keine Grundlage und keine zur glaeubigen Annahme noetigende Kraft. Sie soll und darf eben nur eine Verkuendigung dessen sein, was Gott der Herr durch den Mund der Propheten und Apostel geredet hat. Daher stammt die Verwuestung der Kirche und der Verfall der Gemeinden, dass unter der Herrschaft des Rationalismus (Vernunftreligion) in Schulen und Kirchen das Ansehen der Heiligen Schrift gruendlich untergraben ist und dass man die dumm und einfaeltig gescholten hat, die noch daran glauben, weil es so geschrieben steht. Der Geistliche ist nicht darum, weil er den Chorrock anhat und auf der Kanzel steht, berechtigt, den Glauben zu fordern an das, was er sagt, sondern nur darum, weil er redet, was ihm Gott in seinem heiligen Wort befohlen hat. . . . Kornelius und sein Haus hoerten aus dem Munde des heiligen Apostels nicht Menschenwort, sondern Gottes Wort, und daher empfang er mit den Seinen die Gabe des Heiligen Geistes. . . . Buechner in *Erinnerungen aus dem Leben eines Landpfarrers*."

ness of our present day, an incomparable position. . . . There are not wanting signs today that men will return to Holy Scripture, to drink again the Water of Life and strengthen their souls with the Bread of Life, and that a prodigal Church, sick of the husks of the far country, will return to its Father's house" (*l. cit.*). And those "conservatives" who will not present the words of Holy Scripture as the very words of God, even though they retain portions of the saving truth, treat their people in the same way. They offer these truths as validated by their own authority. They are handing the distressed sinner a broken reed to support him. They turn the Bread of Life, as much as lies in them, into husks.

4. O ye theologians, who have placed private judgment in the seat of authority, *what have you done to the Church?* The churches which are under your domination no longer have the Bible. The Bible still lies upon the pulpit. But not only has the meaning of many of its teachings and statements been changed, but every single one of its statements and teachings has been divested of its divine authority. Their Bible is to all intents and purposes a purely human book. A fearful thing has happened to the Church. By suppressing the God-given right of private judgment the Pope has trained his people to see in the Bible not what God says, but what the Pope says. And after Luther restored the Bible to Christendom, the modern Protestants trained their people to treat it like the fables of Aesop. The Pope and the moderns want God's people to do without God's Book!

Again, and in consequence of the evil principle of private judgment, the Church has been torn asunder. The visible Church presents a sorry spectacle. The various divisions of Christendom do not dwell together as brethren. They cannot. There is no common doctrine, no common faith. And so there is no united testimony for the truth. Whenever the voice of truth is raised, there is murmuring and dissent on all sides. God would not have it so. His invisible Church is one, and He would have the visible Church to be one, all speaking the same thing, perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (1 Cor. 1:10). And He has made full provision for this unity of His Church. He has given her one Bible and has put this Bible into "such a form that the knowledge of the truth is not only possible, but that straying from the truth is impossible as long as we continue in the words of Scripture, as Christ clearly testifies, when in John 8 He *guarantees* us the knowledge of the truth if we continue in His Word" (Pieper, *op. cit.*, I, p. 186).⁵³ But this godly and blessed unity

53) Harnack, in a way, says about the same. Dealing with the Catholic objection "that if every man has warrant to decide what the 'true understanding' of the Gospel is and in this respect is bound to

cannot be established and maintained where men assume the right to put their own interpretation on any and every statement and teaching of Scripture. It is an evil business. The Church is disturbed by bitter controversies, and her glorious work is woefully hampered. The heathen are offended at this state of affairs, God's people grieve over it, and Satan rejoices.

Again, if these men had their way, the Church would no longer be "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). The churches over which they preside are at best mere debating societies. They are everlastingly debating the question: What is truth? but never come to the knowledge of truth, never attain to the conviction of the truth. These debating societies cannot produce men who are strong in the Lord. The Church of the living God produces men like Moses, who was not afraid of the power of Pharaoh, but boldly faced him with his "Thus saith the Lord," while those nurtured in the apostate Church easily capitulate to the demands of reason and, at best, will only hesitatingly and falteringly uphold the teachings of Scripture. And while the Word of the Lord in the mouth of Moses brought deliverance to Israel, the preaching of the moderns cannot deliver the anxious sinner from his uncertainty, doubt, and despair. Their Church cannot function as the pillar and ground of the truth.

Finally, God's people render glad allegiance to their Lord. His Word is law unto them. They are a loyal people. Today the greater part of Christendom is in open rebellion against the Lord, some marching under the banner of the Pope and others under the banner of "Private Judgment." And things have reached such a state that while formerly only those on the outside of the walls were inciting God's people to throw off their allegiance to the Lord, ridiculing and reviling the authority of Scripture, the apostate

no tradition, no council, and no Pope, but exercises the free right of research, any unity, community, or Church is impossible, and that of this confusion the history of Protestantism affords ample testimony," he writes: "Protestantism reckons — this is the solution — upon the Gospel being something so simple, so divine, and therefore so truly human, as to be most certain of being understood when it is left entirely free and also as to produce essentially the same experiences and convictions in individual souls." (*What Is Christianity?* p. 294 f.) Harnack himself claims the right to subject Scripture to his private judgment, but what he here says is true: the Gospel is so simple and the teaching of Scripture on any point so clear that *when it is left entirely free*, when man's reason, etc., does not interfere with it, it produces the same convictions in individual souls; it will produce one doctrine, one faith. Lenski on Acts 17:11: "Everyone of us and all of us together can truly find only this *one* truth and true sense in the Scriptures, and will be thus one in faith. And the Scriptures are clear, perfectly adequate to present this one truth to every man. They who deviate from that one truth, no matter how, can do so only by making the Word mean what it never meant, and *they*, they alone, are to blame for such deviation."

Church today has admitted such men within the walls and entrusted them with the leadership.⁵⁴⁾

The Church is in a bad state. Summarizing, we shall say that the root of the trouble is the unwillingness to bow before the authority of Holy Scripture. An editorial in *The Lutheran* of March 24, 1927, discusses an article in the *Atlantic Monthly*, by a Protestant writer, which pronounces the doom of Protestantism. "Authority in religion is everywhere giving ground." Among the things to be "swept into the dust heap of time" are certain suppositions, false loyalties, bigotry, lay popes, bitter intolerance, terrible emotionalism, etc. All sorts of organizations are formed to prop up the tottering structure; and "Chatauqua devices" to keep alive a seeming interest in religion are put into operation. "The average Protestant Church is like a club in which there are no conditions of membership, no dues, no responsibilities." "The old disciplinary systems of discipline by which the lay members of Protestant churches are bound to profess certain beliefs and to maintain certain rules of conduct, etc., have become as obsolete as the old formulae, the confessions of faith." *The Lutheran* comments: "This writer has not gotten down to the root of the disease. If we had to say what is wrong with large portions of the Protestant Church, we could put it into a single phrase — *unwillingness to bow before the authority of the Word*. 'What saith Scripture?' has ceased to be the all-important question to which teachers and leaders in the Protestant wing of the Church can give a united and satisfying answer. The Reformers were not at a loss to give an answer. When they unseated the Pope, they put Christ and His Word on the throne. . . . The only thing to assure the life of Protestantism, of Evangelical Christianity, is to get back to the authority of the Word. That is the only authority before which the Lutheran Church is willing to bow. . . . We refuse to be numbered among sectarian groups who have no solid ground of faith on which to stand."

54) I. M. Haldeman: "The truth is (according to Modernism) man of today has altogether outgrown the Bible. . . . The Bible, if it is to be tolerated at all among educated and cultured people, must be shorn of its childishness, its barriers to intellectual growth. If it be accepted at all, it can be only as it comes under and responds to this imperial consciousness and experience in man. . . . *Today Modernism is doing more to destroy the Bible and cast it into the final discard than all the efforts of openhanded infidelity.* . . . When this infidelity comes from those in the Church, leaders in the Church, men who are training young men for the Christian ministry; men who not only come in the name of Christ but with profession of love and devotion to Him and a passionate desire to exalt the Bible, free it from all things that hinder its complete acceptance; when such teachers come and after their fashion strike out the Bible from its place of full inspiration, they accomplish a cataclysmic ruin, a shipwreck of faith not possible at the hands of ordinary infidels" (*op. cit.*, p. 108 ff.).

All will be well with the Chirstian Church, all will be well with the Lutheran Church, if men learn to bow before the authority of Scripture, refrain from putting their own thoughts into Scripture, and joyfully follow the directions of their Lord and Master as He speaks to them in His Word. Let us heed the warning Luther uttered in his last sermon at Wittenberg: "I will not swerve one finger's breadth from the mouth of Him who said: 'Hear ye Him.' . . . The devil will turn on the light of reason and turn you away from the faith. . . . If one delights in his own thoughts, fancies, and conceits and puts these fine thoughts into Scripture, das ist der Teufel ganz und gar" (XII:1174).⁵⁵ Let us follow the advice Luther gave in his very last sermon, preached at Eisleben:⁵⁶ "Here is the Lord; Him alone we should hear in these things, as He himself says: 'Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.' He reveals it to the simple and foolish, who do not pride themselves on their own knowledge and wisdom but hear and receive His Word. . . . For the Lord has spoken and thus must it be: All things are delivered unto Me. I am the man who alone shall teach and rule; the wise and learned must not contradict Me; let them blind their eyes and silence their reason. For our wisdom and knowledge concerning divine things is what Satan gave us when he opened our eyes in the Garden. There Adam and Eve wanted to be wise in the devil's name. God Himself had taught them and given them His Word that they should keep it if they would obtain true wisdom. Then came the devil with his better wisdom; he closed their eyes so that they could not see God —

55) In the article "Schriftauslegung und Analogie des Glaubens," *Lehre und Wehre*, 1907, Dr. Pieper says, page 154: "Of the vices to which man is addicted since the Fall the greatest and most pernicious one is this, that he likes to form his *own* thoughts on God and divine things instead of taking all his thoughts exclusively from God's Word. Luther's last sermon preached in Wittenberg deals with this vice. Luther calls it 'Duenkel'. — I would like to recommend that at least those who hold the teaching office in the Church should read this sermon *once* every year. Here Luther shows up, ex professo, the root of the trouble in the Church. The sore trouble in the Church is indeed the evil lust by which men take delight in their own thoughts about God and divine things, thoughts arising *outside* and *beside* God's Word. . . . And in order to deceive themselves and others, they try to hide themselves behind Scripture. Their own thoughts they call Scripture and Holy Spirit, 'right interpretation of Scripture,' 'demanded by the analogy of faith,' etc. And that is what Luther calls: the devil in Scripture."

56) Be it noted that in this very sermon, in which Luther denounced the Pope for suppressing the God-given right of private judgment, he denounced, in equally strong terms, those who set their private judgment above Scripture. It is hard to understand how men can keep on making statements like this: "Luther himself never dreamed of the dynamite in the forces that he had unleashed" (*The Christian Century*, Nov. 30, 1938).

could not see the devil. We, too, are sick with this horrible disease that we would be wise and knowing in the devil's name. . . . This is the lesson we must learn: not to be wise in our own conceit, but just close our eyes, simply stick to Christ's word, go to Him on His kind and gracious bidding, and say: Thou alone art my dear Lord and Master; I am Thy pupil" (XII:1260, 1264).

TH. ENGELDER

The Social Gospel

(With Special Reference to Walter Rauschenbusch)

"Why bother about the social gospel?" a man recently told the present writer. "The social gospel is dead and buried. No one concerns himself about it any more. It has been superseded by the theology of Karl Barth in its various forms, by the religious philosophy of Kierkegaard, by the neo-orthodoxy of Niebuhr and others, and by a number of other movements and developments."

That may be true enough, on the basis of outward appearances. However, we have a parallel phenomenon in Unitarianism. This also was declared to be dead, at least a half century ago. The truth is that it was no longer a positive factor in the church life of America, simply because it had penetrated and permeated practically all those churches, no matter what their antecedents, in which liberalism had become established. The deity of Christ, the personality of the Holy Ghost, had been denied by so many preachers and theologians for so long a time that Unitarianism was practically rampant in many church groups. The same thing holds true for the social gospel in the modern world. It may no longer be a separate movement in the Christian churches of America for the simple reason that it has absorbed or has been absorbed by a great many church bodies as well as individual congregations with their pastors, that it has become part and parcel of much of the religious thinking (and writing) of America. Hence it will be an interesting, if not a profitable, task to inquire into its antecedents, origin, and tenets, and then to examine its present status in the Christian churches of America.

The antecedents of the social gospel are clearly discernible in the religious philosophy of Schleiermacher, with its vague subjectivism, excluding the objective certainty of the grace of God in Christ. Schleiermacher erred with regard to the doctrine of the atonement and therefore also of justification; he erred with regard to the concept "faith"; he erred with regard to the inspiration of the Holy Scripture, referring to an "illumination" of the writers rather than the miracle of inspiration; he was not even clear in

his teaching on the Holy Trinity. He apparently placed all religions on the same level.¹⁾

Another source for the ideas which were expressed in the social gospel are the writings of Albrecht Ritschl. Among the strange ideas which he promulgated is that of explaining "eternal life" as man's control and government of the world. One of his sayings, which is often quoted, states: "Christianity is the monotheistic, perfectly spiritual and moral religion, which, on the basis of the life of its Founder, as of Him who redeemed and established the Kingdom of God, consists in the liberty of the divine sonship, containing in itself the impetus through the love whose object is the moral organization of mankind, and laying the foundation of salvation at the same time in the divine sonship and in the Kingdom of God."²⁾ The position of Ritschl has recently been summarized as follows: "He teaches that the facts on which theology is based are to be sought in religious consciousness or feeling, and nowhere else. As for the Scriptures, he denied their inspiration and authority. The follower of Ritschl seeks God and theological truth in himself. He says he finds 'an indefinite and indefinable feeling which he believes to be God.' . . . Ritschl rejected the deity of Christ, but thought that Jesus was a religious genius, a religious hero who had progressed so far in moral and spiritual attainments that He has to the Christian 'the value of God.' . . . Ritschl speaks of Jesus as divine, but flatly denies His divine nature. He also denies His miraculous birth, His miracles, His resurrection. On the atonement of Christ he wrote a large work in which he defends a doctrine which leaves out the cardinal points of the substitutional sacrifice of Christ."³⁾

Such is the background of the social gospel, as described also by W. A. Brown, a follower of Ritschl in our country.⁴⁾ Vagaries such as this form the foundation for a structure which was built up in the last decades of the last and in the first decades of the present century. It is a philosophy whose force, as indicated above, has by no means been spent, but exerts its power in many ways to this day. The fact that the most comprehensive and sympathetic biography of Walter Rauschenbusch, the high priest of this movement in our country, was issued only two years ago in itself indicates that we are dealing with forces which still constitute a menace for confessional Christianity.⁵⁾

Walter Rauschenbusch (1861—1918) spent a part of his child-

1) See *Proceedings of the Kansas District*, 1921, pp. 16—19.

2) *Reden und Vortraege*, II: 14, 15.

3) Horsch, *Modern Religious Liberalism*, p. 62 f.

4) *Outlines of Christian Theology*, p. 340.

5) Sharpe, Doris Robinson. *Walter Rauschenbusch*. Macmillan, 1942.

hood in Germany, where he was enrolled in the celebrated nursery school at Neuwied and received many impressions which influenced his entire life. He attended secondary schools in Rochester, N. Y., where he acquitted himself with such distinction that his father sent him to Germany, where he first studied at the Gymnasium of Guetersloh and later traveled. He did some preparatory work for the ministry and accepted an appointment as summer supply in a small German Baptist church in Louisville, Ky., in 1884, returning to this post in 1885. He continued his seminary work at Rochester, completing the final courses in 1886. For some years he was active in inner mission work in New York and elsewhere. During this time his religious social theories developed and found an ever-increasing audience. With two friends he organized "The Brotherhood of the Kingdom," a group which became increasingly active in spreading the ideas of "Christian social service," "social Christianity," and the "social gospel." In 1897 Rauschenbusch was called to Rochester Theological Seminary as professor of New Testament interpretation, natural sciences, and civil government, to which were later added zoology, English, and other subjects. Here he did his life work, especially after he, in 1902, accepted the chair of church history. His dynamic way of teaching soon gave him a great following and increased his sphere of influence immensely, particularly also through his books. One of these, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (last edition 1937), had a sale of over fifty thousand copies, while the others easily exceeded half that amount. He was quoted everywhere, and some of his admirers were extravagant in their praise of him. He was called "the prophet of the New Reformation," "a modern prophet of the Kingdom of God," "a friend of humanity," and even "Defensor Fidei."

But what about the theology for the social gospel?

We find, in the first place, that the men who have taught the social gospel *do not regard and employ the Bible as the inerrant Word of God*. Nowhere is the solid foundation of the Sacred Record emphasized. On the contrary, the disciples of this school seem to regard Christianity as one of the great religions of the world and its sacred Book as one of those which have found recognition. J. F. Clarke writes: "The curious fact in regard to this theory of verbal inspiration is that the Bible itself makes no such claim. . . . Inspiration means the descent of some higher truth into the soul by vital processes, not merely logical or mechanical." ⁶⁾ G. B. Smith asserts: "The Bible is valued today because of its actual power to quicken our religious and moral ideals rather than because of any particular theory concerning its origin." ⁷⁾ And by another man of

6) *Common Sense in Religion*, pp. 27, 90. Cp. pp. 93, 91.

7) *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology*, p. 217.

the group we are told: "Reverent appreciation of the Bible as our ultimate literary expression of the life of the Spirit does not compel one to accept blindly or to interpret literally every narrative or statement it contains. Here, as in all ancient history and literature, criticism has a great sifting process to perform. And the more searchingly and thoroughly this is done, the more valuable and reliable will the book become."⁸⁾ The entire attitude of the theology for the social gospel is that of subjectivism, of applying the yardstick of human wisdom to the eternal verities of the inspired Record. In chapter III of his book, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, Rauschenbusch himself, as the prophet of the new order, places the entire New Testament teaching into the category of uncertain sources, calling the information meager and incomplete and stating that "of those writings which did survive only a limited number were embodied in the canon of the New Testament."⁹⁾ The "leading them into all the truth" and "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" evidently did not mean much to the apostles of the new social order. Wherever we may open a book written by these men, we may be sure to find vague and inadequate statements concerning the Bible. There is none of the boldness that can say, in full confidence: "Thus saith the Lord."

In the second place (and this is the most significant aberration and denial of Scripture truth), the theology of the social gospel sets aside the Biblical doctrine concerning sin and grace, that is, the atonement wrought for sinners through the vicarious suffering of the Son of God. Their conception of sin is totally inadequate. Rauschenbusch writes: "The traditional doctrine of the Fall is the product of speculative interest mainly. . . . It would strengthen the appeal of the social gospel if evil could be regarded as a variable factor in the life of humanity. . . . Sin is essentially selfishness. . . . To find the climax of sin, we must not linger over a man who swears or sneers at religion or denies the mystery of the Trinity, but put our hands on social groups who have turned the patrimony of a nation into the private property of a small class or have left the peasant-laborers cowed, degraded, demoralized, and without rights in the land."¹⁰⁾ Similar expressions abound in the books of the social gospelites. "Sin is villainy in public life."¹¹⁾ "Sin is the destruction of the interests of society and of other individuals, in order to secure the immediate gratification of the sinner at the social expense."¹²⁾ "What the theologians call original sin the

8) Hyde, *Social Theology*, p. 192. 9) P. 101.

10) *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, pp. 41, 43, 45.

11) Clarke, *Common Sense in Religion*, p. 131.

12) Hyde, *Outlines of Social Theology*, p. 92.

new theology does not believe in. . . . Sin cannot be inherited."¹³⁾ Rauschenbusch even has what he evidently considered a plausible explanation of what is commonly called sin in orthodox parlance: "According to evolutionary science the impulses connected with our alimentary and reproductive organs run far back in the evolution of the race and are well established and imperious, whereas the social, altruistic, and spiritual impulses are of recent development and relatively weak."¹⁴⁾

Naturally, the Scriptural teaching concerning forgiveness and grace have no room in such a plan. Self-righteousness and work-righteousness are the chief characteristics of the social gospel. Gladden writes: "He who has learned to love God, who is the perfect Goodness and Truth, with the highest love of his heart, and to love his neighbor as himself, is a saved man, no matter what creed he may confess or what language he may speak. . . . The very beginning of salvation, I say, is the change of mind by which you come to see and realize that the way of Christ, which is the way of unselfishness, is the right way for you to live."¹⁵⁾ And Rauschenbusch expresses himself in the same vague and inadequate manner: "A salvation confined to the soul and its personal interests is an imperfect and only partly effective salvation. . . . The form which the process of redemption takes in a given personality will be determined by the historical and social spiritual environment of the man. At any rate, any religious experience in which our fellow men have no part or thought does not seem to be a distinctively Christian experience. . . . Complete salvation, therefore, would consist in an attitude of love in which man would freely co-ordinate his life with the life of his fellows in obedience to the loving impulses of the spirit of God, thus taking his part in the divine organism of mutual service."¹⁶⁾

What about the Cross and the redemption through the blood of Calvary? Rauschenbusch states: "He [Christ] saw a red line running through history, and His own life and death were part of it. He Himself generalized the social value of His peculiar experience and taught us to see the Cross as a great social principle of the Kingdom of God."¹⁷⁾ In the opinion of G. B. Smith redemption involves the following factors: "The salvation which we may have through Christ is located in the power of the Christian community to transmit from generation to generation the God-consciousness which is possible because of the moral courage and the spiritual

13) Gladden, *Present-Day Theology*, pp. 69, 73.

14) Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 58.

15) *Present-Day Theology*, pp. 83, 85.

16) *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, pp. 95, 97, 98.

17) *The Social Principles of Jesus*, p. 175.

insight created by our acquaintance with Christ." 18) All of which seems to mean: If all men follow the example of Christ closely, so that the entire community is filled with that consciousness, then such a community possesses salvation. According to Hyde the situation is still more simple: "The redemption of the world means the prevalence of a healthy, happy, holy, human life." 19) We could quote at length also from Sellars and from Vedder, the latter, for example, ridiculing the idea that God sent His Son to pay the penalty of our sins, which He bore in our behalf. Clarke goes into the matter of the atonement at some length: "So it is true that it has been believed that Jesus Christ as our Substitute did actually suffer the spiritual and eternal death which is the penalty of sin. But it is safe to say that nothing so horrible as this has been taught in any theological seminary in this country for the past hundred years. . . . Christ died in our behalf, but not in our stead. . . . It may be well to say that those old figures of ransom, of debt, of juridical necessity, of governmental policy, are utterly incapable of explaining the matter. . . . The new theology teaches that God does not need to be appeased or placated and that nothing needs to be done for His government to make it possible for Him to forgive and save the sinner. . . . This is the atonement, it is the revelation of God to men, when they see Him as He is and know Him, then they are reconciled to Him." 20)

But how do the proponents of the social gospel understand the word "faith"? Clarke indicates that it is about the same feeling that drove Columbus over the western ocean in 1492. Speer puts it thus: "Faith in God, in the reality and supremacy of the moral and spiritual values, interests, and forces, faith in man." 21) Hyde puts it thus: "We must lay hold of the good we have not yet attained. And this apprehension of unrealized goodness is faith." 22) And Clarke tops the false and inadequate notions regarding the meaning of faith when he states: "We mean that Christ in His life and character shows us how God feels, that He reveals God, and that when we see how Christ loved, spoke, acted, under any circumstances, we see how God would act, feel, and speak under the same circumstances. . . . All real knowledge has its roots in faith; all moral power is born of faith; all generous goodness and truth is rooted in faith. Jesus came to seek and save lost souls by giving them some clear, strong convictions by

18) *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, p. 231.

19) *Outlines of Social Theology*, p. 228.

20) *Common Sense in Religion*, pp. 158, 159, 164 f.

21) *The New Opportunity of the Church*.

22) *Outlines of Social Theology*, p. 114.

which to live and die." 23) If we compare this shallow definition making with the clear presentation of the essence of saving faith as given in Scripture, we cannot but have a feeling of sadness for the souls who are led astray by such falsehoods.

That the theologians of the social gospel do not even possess the slightest apprehension of the Scripture facts concerning the way of salvation is evident from many passages. Thus Rauschenbusch falls hopelessly short of the truth when he writes: "These traditional theological explanations of the death of Christ have less Biblical authority than we are accustomed to suppose. The fundamental terms and ideas — 'satisfaction,' 'substitution,' 'imputation,' 'merit,' are post-Biblical ideas and are alien from the spirit of the gospel. . . . How did Jesus bear sins which He did not commit? The old theology replied, By imputation. But guilt and merit are personal. They cannot be transferred from one person to another. We tamper with moral truths when we shuffle them about. Imputation is a legal device to enable the law to hold one man responsible for the crime committed by another. Imputation sees mankind as a mass of individuals, and the debts of every individual are transferred to Christ. The solution does not lie in that way. Neither is it enough to say that Jesus bore our sins by sympathy. . . . The solution of the problem lies in the recognition of solidarity. . . . Our analysis of race sin culminated in the recognition of a kingdom of evil. Jesus lived in the midst of that kingdom, and it was this which killed Him." 24) The horrifying ignorance and blindness of this man is shared by Hyde: "To condemn a sinner because of his sin to more misery than the direct consequences of his sin involve, to keep him in condemnation and punishment after he had repented of his sin and was trying to overcome it, would be an act not of a Father, but of a brute; not of God, but of a devil. It would be an act, not of truth and light and love, but of falsehood and darkness and malignity." 25) These are statements whose falseness and blasphemy can be refuted by the average Lutheran catechumen. What is the place of Christ in this system? Sellars puts it briefly thus: "Jesus, the Carpenter, with His kindly word for the poor and downtrodden and His scorn for the haughty and rich, has become the symbol and sign of a new social ethics." 26)

The social gospel not only denies the most fundamental doctrines of the Bible, but has laid its blasphemous hands on practically every teaching of Christianity which did not agree with the system that Rauschenbusch and his followers had built up. Concerning

23) *Common Sense in Religion*, pp. 345, 349.

24) *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, pp. 242, 245.

25) *Outlines of Social Theology*, p. 134.

26) *The Next Step in Religion*.

the creation of the world Gladden writes: "We know that the old idea that the creation of man took place about 4,000 years before Christ was born is altogether inadequate. We have a pre-Hebrew, a prehistoric world of unimaginable extent and impressiveness to confront us, a world beside whose population the inhabitants of the entire historic period are but as a drop to the ocean." ²⁷⁾

With regard to the miracles of Scripture some of these social-gospel theologians wax almost facetious. In many instances they evade the issue by simply declaring that occurrences which do not agree with human science cannot be accepted. Even in the Virgin Birth God is said to have made use of ordinary instruments, and parthenogenesis occurs in lower forms of animal life. The miraculous feeding of the sons of the prophets, according to these modern scribes, was simply due to the fact that the young men lost their appetite and that for this reason the small quantity of food was sufficient. Gladden puts it thus: "It is true indeed that we cannot deny to God this power, but with our present habits of thinking we might find it difficult to believe that, if He had this power, He would exercise it." ²⁸⁾

One of the reasons why the social gospelites utter such nonsense is due to the fact that they teach the immanence of God without His transcendence. Gladden writes: "The immanence of God is the central truth of the present-day theology." ²⁹⁾ The explanation is to be found in the fact, as Rauschenbusch explains the situation, that God is immanent in nature, in mankind, that the term "god" is merely a sanctified expression for everything that has being, that God and the world, the universe, are identical, that God is the world energy, the sum total of all its natural laws. This nonsense has been branded as such so frequently in Christian literature that it would be superfluous to enumerate the clear teaching that completely discredits all such sensational balderdash.

What about the doctrine of God in social theology? According to G. B. Smith, God is "the spiritual forces of the world in which we live," "the unseen forces of the universe." ³⁰⁾ According to another modern teacher we are to accept the definition: "God is my deeper self and yours, too; He is the self of the universe." Another has declared: "Do you ask me whether God is simply the spirit of humanity? I reply that God is essentially and simply just that." ³¹⁾ The Biblical doctrine of the Trinity has been completely disfigured and emasculated, even though the orthodox designations are sometimes retained. Thus King writes: "The

27) *Present-Day Theology*, p. 11.

28) *Op. cit.*, p. 44.

29) *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

30) *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, pp. 537, 511.

31) Cp. Horsch, *Modern Religious Liberalism*, p. 76.

Biblical Trinity is in truth what it has sometimes been called, the trinity of redemption, and for me directly emphasizes the great facts of redemption. Here there are three great facts: First, the fatherhood of God, that God is in His very being Father, Love, self-manifesting as light, self-giving as life, self-communicating, pouring Himself out into the life of His children, wishing to share His highest life with them, every one. Secondly, the concrete, unmistakable revelation of the Father in Christ, revealed in full ethical perfection, as an actual fact to be known and experienced; no longer an unknown, hidden, or only partially and imperfectly revealed God, but a real, living God of character, counting as a real, appreciable, but fully appreciable fact in the real world. And, thirdly, the Father revealing Himself by His Spirit in every individual heart that opens itself to Him, in a constant, intimate divine association, which yet is never obtrusive, but reverent of the man's personality, making possible to every man the ideal conditions of the richest life."³²⁾ With such hollow mockery hiding the truth of Scriptures, it is no wonder that Clarke dares to exclaim: "The Christian, worshiping in name the true God, worships in reality the false one; and the pagan, worshiping in name Jupiter, worships in reality the God and Father of Jesus Christ."³³⁾ Such statements not only *approach* blasphemy, for they *are* a direct transgression of the First Commandment. As may be supposed, the deity of Christ is not accepted by the theologians of the social gospel. They use the term divinity, but deny the essential sonship of Jesus. G. B. Smith writes: "The divinity of Christ . . . must be sought in the God-consciousness which dominated His life. It is only as we share this God-consciousness and thus discover God within our life that we can confess our belief in the divinity of Christ in any religious sense."³⁴⁾ Just as nebulous and out of harmony with clear Scriptural statements is the explanation of Hyde: "What, then is sonship? Who, then, is the Son of God? The Son of God is He who, in the cramping limitations of space, under the evanescent form of time, with the finite instrument of flesh, and with the partial knowledge which is conditioned by a particular human brain, still sees nature as the expression of an omniscient Mind; beholds human society as the unfolding of one universal Will; recognizes every man as the reproduction of the thought and the will of the Father; accepts every duty and relationship of life as an opportunity to do the will of the Father and to bring men to the consciousness of their sonship to God and their brotherhood with each other."³⁵⁾

32) *Theology and Its Social Consciousness*, pp. 225, 226.

33) *Common Sense in Religion*, p. 65.

34) *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology*, p. 231.

35) *Outlines of Social Theology*, p. 50.

As one may expect under such circumstances, the doctrine of the Holy Ghost is also completely distorted. Hyde explains it in the following words: "The spirit of social service is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father; for if there were no absolute and eternal thought and will binding all men together in the unity of one conception and one purpose, then it would be ultra-rational, absurd, to live a life in which the social good should be the aim of individual endeavor. The Holy Spirit is the realization of the will of God in the life of humanity. The Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Son, as the later creed rightly affirms; for without the example and inspiration of one to whom the Spirit was given without measure, and who embodies the perfection of the Father's will and manifests the completeness of the social service, the reproduction of the divine life among frail, finite men would have been feeble, fickle, and fragmentary. The Holy Spirit is Christ multiplied into individuals and reproduced in institutions. . . . The Holy Spirit is the thought of God, the life of Christ, reproduced on those who obey God and follow Christ." ³⁶⁾ But, we ask, Where is the personality of the Holy Ghost, and where are the personal functions which are so definitely taught in the Holy Scriptures?

Quite naturally, the doctrine of the virgin birth goes by the board, at least in the opinion of the theologians of the social gospel. Hyde writes: "Belief in the divinity of Christ [namely, as he interprets the term] does not rest on such narratives as the accounts of the 'Gospel of the Infancy' introduced into the opening chapters of Matthew and Luke, and is entirely independent of the question whether we interpret these narratives as fact or fancy, poetry or prose. Any attempt to base the belief in the divinity of Christ on the miraculous is sure to alienate multitudes of honest minds, who will thus be led to regard it as simply one among the many deifications of saints and heroes with which the legends of antiquity abound." ³⁷⁾ Gladden is just as cool in setting aside the virgin birth of Christ when he writes: "The truth is that nothing is added to the moral greatness of Christ by insisting on this doctrine, and nothing subtracted from His essential divinity by the belief that He entered the world in a way that God has sanctified for all His children; and all disputation about the subject is not only unprofitable, but unseemly." ³⁸⁾

If space would permit, we could present additional material to show that the theology of the social gospel as taught by Rauschenbusch and his followers denies also the following Scripture truths: the doctrine of the devil and of the evil angels, the doctrine of the Sacraments, the doctrine of immortality, the doctrine

36) *Op. cit.*, pp. 80, 82.

37) *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

38) *Present-Day Theology*, p. 143.

of hell. On the last-named point Rauschenbusch has this to say: "No man, in any human sense of justice, has deserved an eternity of hell. . . . Today many Protestants are allowing the physical fires of hell to go out, and make the pain of hell to consist in the separation from God. They base the continuance of hell not on the sovereign decree of God, but on the progressive power of sin which gradually extinguishes all love of good and therewith all capacity for salvation."³⁹ And Gladden declares: "Heaven is not limited to any place in this life or the next; it has no boundaries. . . . The essential elements of heaven and hell are in every man's heart, in every man's life. . . . The substance of hell is alienation from, and enmity against, God. . . . Heaven and hell are not, primarily, places; they are states of character. They are not confined to the other side of death, they are here and now."⁴⁰ This may suffice to characterize the anti-Scriptural, anti-Christian nature of the social gospel and its theology.

In conclusion, however, it is necessary to point to the most significant feature of the social gospel, namely, its thorough present-worldliness. Its exponents delight in bandying about the concept "Kingdom of God." They have, of course, abandoned the clear teaching of the Bible on this point, especially as offered in Rom. 14: 16, 17 and elsewhere, and proudly proclaim a kingdom which consists essentially in the amelioration of social conditions in this world. All the books written by Rauschenbusch are based on this feature. According to him the Kingdom of God is "the right social order" (chapters IV—VI). He states: "The conception of the Kingdom of God has forged to the front as the modern spirit has come to religious self-consciousness, and has been enlarged and modernized to make it the adequate receptacle for the vaster range of present-day knowledge. In recent years it has become the common possession of thoughtful religious men. Every constructive force in modern religion has contributed to its ascendancy. . . . The spread of evolutionary ideas is another mark of religious thought. . . . It has prepared us for understanding the Reign of God toward which all creation is moving. Translate the evolutionary theories into religious faith, and you have the doctrine of the Kingdom of God. This combination with scientific evolutionary thought has freed the Kingdom ideal of its catastrophic setting and its background of demonism, and so adapted it to the climate of the modern world."⁴¹ When one reads the same author's *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, especially pp. 54—57, one is astounded to find that a man who professes to be a Christian can be so hopelessly

39) *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 233.

40) *Op. cit.*, pp. 96, 102, 115.

41) *Christianizing the Social Order*, pp. 89, 90.

muddled in his thinking on facts so clearly taught in the Bible, facts which certainly oppose his notions of the "Kingdom" in every way. Yet the other men in the field evidently share the views of their "prophet." Hyde writes: "The Kingdom of God is realized in actual service of the world, in costly sacrifice for men, in the heat of the conflict, and in the joy of achieved victory."⁴²⁾

No wonder that the aim and object of the Church's work is completely misunderstood and misrepresented by the teachers of the social gospel. It is evident throughout their writings that they are concerned only with the "here and now," that the real spiritual values of the Gospel and of the way of salvation are not accepted by them. Speer names as the "present business of the Church: to supply ideals for society and for humanity and the convictions which must sustain such ideals."⁴³⁾ Ward states it in this form: "The world needs a social religion, a religion dealing with all the business of life, including every interest, covering work as well as prayer, and which will be just as vital in the factory, the shop, and the mind, as in the home or the church."⁴⁴⁾ Just as though the Christian religion, in the proper sequence and with the proper foundation, were not supplying the needs of men in all circumstances of life. But it is undoubtedly the nebulous character of the social gospel, with its many half-truths, and with its habit of "covering the substance of hell with the livery of heaven," together with man's inveterate inclination toward self-righteousness, that has made the social gospel such a potent force in all modernistic movements.

P. E. KRETZMANN

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Outlines on the Standard Gospels

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

Luke 5:1-11

"All things are possible to him that believeth." What a glorious promise. It is given by the Savior Himself, who can make good His promise, and always does. But we are so slow to believe such a promise. As a result we are not always as happy and as cheerful and as successful as we could be and as the Savior would have us be. In our text today the Savior encourages us to believe Him, to grow in faith, to say with Peter,

"Nevertheless at Thy Word I Will Let Down the Net"

1

This Word we should apply to our own personal Christianity.

a) We are confronted by situations similar to that of Peter and His companions, v. 5. Now, at an apparent inopportune time of the morning the Savior says to them: v. 4. — We at times labor without much success; we pray, and our prayer remains unanswered. To us it seems there is no hope of success. We have put our best skill into our labor, what more can we do? Trying times? Yes, trying for our faith when the Master says, "Launch out." The Master's voice comes to us, saying, Try again, labor on, keep on praying, Luke 11:5-13. It is then we should say with Peter, "*Nevertheless*," in spite of it all, "at Thy word I will let down the net."

b) Like Peter, we shall never be disappointed when we follow the Savior's directions, putting our trust and confidence in Him. Vv. 6, 7. Miraculous! Those who obey the Lord and put their trust in Him are never disappointed. Jesus says to the nobleman, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." "The man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him," and he found his son alive, John 4:50-54. Cp. Acts 16:30-34. Likewise, if we believe in our Savior, who redeemed us from sin, we shall rejoice, our sins can then no longer trouble us. It is our unbelief that makes us miserable. Lord, increase our faith, that we may say, "*Nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net.*"

2

This Word we should also apply to ourselves as workers in the kingdom of the Lord.

a) Like unto Peter, we are also called to be fishers of men. The purpose of Christ's miracles was "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might

have life through His name," John 20:31. Christ was not just a miracle man. He "taught the people out of the ship," v. 4; He presented Himself to them as the Savior. At the same time He was calling men to be His apostles, to carry the Gospel message into all parts of the world, to be fishers of men, v. 10. The miraculous draught of fishes was to strengthen their faith in Him as their Lord and Savior and thus encourage them for the work of the ministry.

Not all Christians are called to be pastors, but all are called to be witnesses of Christ. What an honor! What a responsibility! Christ's miracle elicited from Peter the confession "I am a sinful man, O Lord," v. 8. But the Lord is willing to use us sinful men, after our own conversion, to convert others by the preaching of the Gospel. With this net we are "to catch men," v. 10. The war-torn world's great need is the Gospel of peace, peace with God through Jesus Christ. The war is God's judgment upon a sinful world calling men to repentance. The Christian Church of today is face to face with a tremendous task. Will she measure up to it? The Lord will not fail her.

b) He has promised that our labor in the Lord will not be in vain, 1 Cor. 15:57, 58. That miraculous draught of fishes was to prefigure the work of the Church, when she, at her Master's bidding, lets down her Gospel net for a draught. Even in this work we shall at times toil all night and take nothing. Missionary work, not only among the savages and in heathen countries, but also among the heathen at home, is often disappointing, showing no or little result for a period of time in spite of hard labor on the part of the workers. Even the thought of abandonment of the work may be contemplated. But the Master says, "Launch out," v. 4, do not stop, go on. And with Peter we should answer, "Nevertheless at Thy Word I will let down the net," v. 5. Success will follow, must follow; for the Lord cannot disappoint. Often we are put to shame in our missionary endeavors because of our little faith, our lack of faith. Individuals whom we considered hopeless have turned out to be staunch Christians, leaders in the Church. Many a Saul has been turned into a Paul. Fields which we thought to abandon have later turned out to be most fruitful. The Apostles did not labor in vain, nor do we labor in vain. Let us remain faithful to the Word of God, the eternal truth, and obey the Master's command to proclaim His Gospel of salvation; the Lord will give success. "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men," v. 10. Let us forsake all, all that would interfere with this blessed work, and follow Him, v. 11.

J. H. C. FRITZ

Sixth Sunday after Trinity**Matt. 5:20-26**

Examining oneself is a profitable exercise. In schools many tests are now arranged so that the pupil gauges his own ability. Standardized tests are immensely popular. Newspapers and magazines have taken up the idea with lists of questions by which we can check our knowledge and our attitudes.

Also in a spiritual sense we can and should examine ourselves. 2 Cor. 13, 5. Our text presents an opportunity for testing our righteousness.

Examining Ourselves Whether We are Leading a Righteous Life

Let us ask ourselves these questions:

1. *Are we satisfied with a mere civil righteousness?*
2. *Are we satisfied with a mere outward worship?*
3. *Are we satisfied to remain unforgiving to the offending brother?*

1

a) Civil righteousness is concerned only with the outward act and does not ask about the motives of our action. Example: A man may pay his taxes with hatred and cursing; but so long as he pays them, he has exercised civil righteousness, for the state does not ask for any particular inward motives.

b) The Pharisees and the scribes were satisfied with this kind of righteousness. V. 20. They believed that if the gross outward transgressions of the Law had been avoided, the commandments had been kept.

Such mere outward keeping of the Law means little; it still bars from entrance into God's kingdom. Much more is involved in the keeping of God's Law: It demands that the innermost motives also be pure and holy. Anger in the heart, sinful words, are just as much a violation of the Fifth Commandment as the actual deed of taking life, v. 22.

c) This Pharisaic righteousness is very common: it seeks merely the approval of fellow men, the approval of the state's laws, conformity to the customs and folkways of the community, the favorable opinion of fellow church members. But far more is required: holy desires and pure motives must be the basis of all our acts.

How do we rate on this first question?

2

a) Worship can become mechanical and merely a going through the motions. Jesus refers to such v. 23. A man could come to the Temple at Jerusalem although he knew that fellow men had

grievous charges against him, go through the outward act of sacrificing without the greater grace of first being reconciled. Such worship is worthless: "Leave there thy gift"; "be reconciled." An unreconciled worshiper worships in vain.

b) There are so many temptations to such mere outward worship today. "Save the surface and you save all" is not only a paint slogan, but is often applied to worship. Prayers that are mere "much speaking," church attendance that is mere hollow formality, giving for God's kingdom which is done merely to avoid the uncomfortable censure of public opinion, traditionalism rather than convictions in religious life, the empty phrase rather than the meaningful confession—all this is merely bringing the gift to the altar, but the heart is not in the sacrifice.

How do we rate on this question?

3

a) The Pharisaic explanation of the Fifth Commandment was that only actual murder was a transgression. Jesus shows that all the "minor" sins of hatred, ugly words, and even the subtle, unexpressed sin of an unforgiving attitude, is yet a violation of God's holy Law.

b) Few motions are so basic to our nature as the desire for revenge and to pay back the offender in kind, getting even. Generally the world sanctions this desire. Few emotions enter more frequently into daily life, and few are harder to suppress. Many think that to forgive and forget is a sign of weakness.

Jesus says: "Agree with thine adversary quickly"; He does not ask how hard it is or how unjust the adversary may have been. Forgiving is one of those exercises of crucifying our flesh.

How do we rate on this question?

This text holds God's Law before us in all its searching brilliance; it condemns us all.

We can find refuge only in the greater righteousness of Christ, procured for all men by His vicarious fulfilling of the Law. In Him we also find strength to lead a new life.

H. O. A. KEINATH

Seventh Sunday after Trinity

Mark 8:1-9

Through the marriage of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and by giving this first couple the promise of children, God established the home and parenthood. Of the many varied pursuits that engage the attention of human beings—agriculture, com-

merce, etc., none can supersede parenthood. In view of trends that have been disturbing many homes throughout our country for a number of years it is well for us to emphasize the obligation resting on the shoulders of the father of a family.

Jesus an Example for All Fathers

1. *In providing daily bread for those that belong to him*
2. *In looking after the soul interests of those committed to his care.*

1

Vv. 1-3. Jesus, the Creator of the universe (John 1:3; Heb. 1:2-4), provides for all His creatures. He who will not let a sparrow fall to the ground without His will, looks in particular after the bodily needs of human beings. In a miraculous way He feeds more than four thousand people, vv. 4-9.

Although Jesus teaches us not to worry about food, drink, and clothing (Matt. 6:24-34), it is nevertheless not improper for us to concern ourselves with the question of bodily needs. Jesus Himself suggests this question, v. 2. The man who marries and begets children is obligated to provide daily bread for them (Gen. 30:30; 1 Tim. 5:8). Through prayer, mental and physical effort, God has promised to bless the father's endeavors. He should pray the Fourth Petition and earn his daily bread in the sweat of his brow (Prov. 6:6; 10:5; 12:11; 20:13; 22:29). For all the implications of daily bread see Luther's explanation of the Fourth Petition.

2

Only at the end of the third day Jesus spoke about daily bread for the body, vv. 1, 2. During these three days He had performed many miracles of healing, Matt. 15:30, 31. It is impossible to suppose that Jesus ministered only to the needs of the body. He who would not let Himself be detained very long in any locality (Mark 1:38), who preached in their synagogues (Mark 1:39; 6:6; Matt. 9:35), who delivered the Sermon on the Mount, who gave the disciples of John an adequate answer (Luke 7:22, 23, 27), who invited the heavy laden unto Himself (Matt. 11:28-30), who spoke many things in parables (Matt. 13), who taught His disciples to pray for laborers in His kingdom (Matt. 9:36-38), who sent His disciples out to preach (Matt. 10:7; Mark 6:12; Luke 9:2, 6), could not have kept multitudes with Himself for three days and offer them nothing for their souls. As a real Father His first concern was for the soul of the multitudes. He spoke of repentance, of forgiveness, of heaven, of Himself as the Messiah. He instructed, He encouraged, He comforted, He warned. He gave the multitudes abundant spiritual food.

You fathers cannot suppose that your whole duty toward your children is performed when you earn money and supply them with food and other necessities of life. As Jesus was interested primarily in the souls of men, so you as fathers are held by God to look after the soul health of your children. You yourself must know what it means to be about the business of your heavenly Father. You yourselves must see in Jesus your only Savior from sin. You yourselves must have a heart filled with faith, love, zeal, devotion, for your Lord. When you have realized the value of laying your heart in the hands of Jesus, your first concern will center around the soul health of your children. As early as possible you will teach your children to pray. Later, personally and through Christian teachers, you will teach your children the abiding truths of the Bible. By word and example you will bend your every effort toward making loyal members of the body of Christ out of your children. Through such devotion to Jesus and to your children you know you will be united with your children in heaven for all eternity.

May God give you fathers the proper attitude toward work, toward His Word, toward your children.

ALEX WM. C. GUEBERT

Eighth Sunday after Trinity

Matt. 7:15-23

Camouflage is important in warfare; used from the wooden horse of Troy to the nets spread over battleships in present conflict. In spiritual warfare Satan is a past master of camouflage. Cf. Gen. 3:1-15; 2 Cor. 11:14. Satan's messengers — the false prophets — imitate him in his deceptive tricks and would mislead many; hence the warning.

Spiritual Camouflage

1. *Wherein it consists*
2. *How it can be detected*
3. *How it is punished*

1

Camouflage — attempted deception; ships, tanks, guns, and clothes are painted and outfitted to make them less conspicuous or give them a nonmilitary appearance.

The camouflage of false prophets is called sheep's clothing; i. e., that which hides their ravenous designs. This may consist in smooth words (cf. Rom. 16:18) or in pious deeds. The false prophets are still called prophets. They are not gross idolaters like the pagans but claim to be followers of Christ. The name of the Lord is on their lips, v. 21. Like Baalam, Num. 24:16, they

may be endowed with the power of prophecy, v. 23. They may even attempt exorcism; cf. Matt. 12:27; Acts 19:13.

False prophets use the same tactics today. *Science and Health* begins with a statement on prayer by Jesus. The opening paragraph of Russell's *Millennial Dawn* praises "divine grace." (If specific cults are mentioned, brevity and exactness should be observed.)

Deception is the work of Satan, John 8:44; but truth is of God, Ps. 33:4. May we in all sincerity confess our faith. We have nothing to hide. Openly we may unfurl the banners of our God.

2

Camouflage can be detected, but it is a difficult task and requires careful observation. In war, photography aids in its detection. Artificial colors and fake structures which even powerful field glasses will not reveal are registered on the sensitive film of the picture. Hours of painstaking study are then required to recognize the deception.

Also the camouflage of false prophets can be detected, vv. 16, 20. As in nature every tree bears fruit after its kind, worthless trees producing unsound fruit and the fruit of thistles being unprofitable, vv. 16-18; so false prophets produce fruit after their kind. The chief business of a prophet is preaching; accordingly, what he preaches, his doctrine, is his fruit. This doctrine should be examined, 2 Thess. 5:20, 21; 2 John 10. The criterion whereby all preaching must be judged is the Bible, Acts 17:11; Gal. 1:8, 9. By carefully examining all teaching in the light of Scripture, we shall be able to uncover the deception of false prophets. They are only pseudoprophets — fakes — who sooner or later will be revealed.

Recognizing false prophets is possible only through the power of the Holy Spirit by God's Word. Persons poorly grounded in the Bible become their easy prey; cf. Luke 8:13. In the face of this danger let us use every proper means to become better established in God's Word, thereby more firmly to believe in Jesus as our only Savior from sin, and in the power of His Spirit guard against all spiritual deception.

3

Even in war, camouflage may become dangerous. Paratroopers found in civilian garb on enemy soil are shot as spies.

A tree blooming ever so profusely, yet not producing good fruit is eliminated from the orchard, v. 19. Jesus' application: v. 23. He tells false prophets that in spite of their outward profession of Christianity, they never belonged to His elect; while they boasted of their accomplishments, they lacked that righteousness which avails before God; while they pretended to follow Him on

earth, they will be definitely separated from Him in eternity. Cf. Ps. 1:6 b; Matt. 18:6.

Spiritual camouflage is ever a makeshift, soon uncovered, and eternally punished. Let us beware of its deceit and rather follow the pure Gospel preaching. Thereby our faith will be strengthened, 2 Tim. 3:15. We shall then do the will of the Father in heaven, v. 21 b, *i. e.*, accept Jesus as His Son and our only Savior. Thus we shall have our "fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life," Rom. 6:22.

VICTOR MENNICKE

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Luke 16:1-9

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," 1 Cor. 10:12. With these words of today's Epistle, punctuated by the multiple examples of God's wrath visited on Israel (1 Cor. 10:5-10), our Lord warns us against a smug complacency and urges prudence in the use of His manifold mercies. Such an admonition is given us also in the Gospel for today through the parable of the Unjust Steward. Its lesson:

Be Prudent in the Use of Your Earthly Possessions

I. Use them as the property of the Lord, for which you are accountable.

A. As the "goods" entrusted to the steward of our text were the property of his master, v. 1, even so all our earthly possessions are the Lord's.

1. "A steward is a person entrusted with the management of estates or affairs not his own," *Standard Dictionary*. Here, *οικονόμος*, lit., "a person entrusted with the management of a house."

2. Our earthly goods are called "mammon," v. 9, and here we include not only money (mammon being the Aramaic and Syrian word for money), but all resources of man (Greek: *μαμωνάς*, perhaps means, "what is trusted in," Thayer. "Treasure," Gesenius; "riches," Edersheim; hence our earthly possessions. See Luther's explanation of "daily bread" in the Lord's Prayer).

3. "Unrighteous" mammon, v. 9, because so frequently used with sin.

4. We are God's stewards because all our earthly possessions are His, Ps. 100:3; 24:1; 1 Chron. 29:14; John 3:27; 1 Cor. 4:7; Jas. 1:17.

B. As the steward of our parable was required to "give an account" of his stewardship, v. 2, even so we must give an account

of our stewardship, 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12, according to our abilities and gifts, Luke 19:13-26; Matt. 25:14-30; and Luke 12:45-48.

C. As the steward of our text was "unjust," v. 8, because he "was wasting" (Greek: διασκορπίζων, pres. part.) his master's goods, v. 1, so we are unjust stewards because we in like manner are wasting our Lord's possessions.

1. How many of the 8,760 hours of each year are we spending in God's house and in His service? What use are we making of our earthly resources in the cause of His Church, His Sunday school, His Christian day school, and His Synod?

2. Well might we pray, therefore, in today's Psalm, "Save me, O God, by Thy name," and when He pardons us for Jesus' sake confess in the words of the Introit, "Behold God is mine Helper."

II. Invest them now for the life to come.

A. As the "unjust steward" was prudent about his earthly future, so we ought to be prudent about the life to come.

1. The moment he saw the end of his stewardship approaching, he made plans for his future welfare, vv. 3, 4. In this respect, "the children of this world," etc., v. 8 b.

2. Our earthly possessions will some day "fail," v. 9; Matt. 24:35; 6:19; 2 Pet. 3:10-14.

3. How foolish, therefore, to neglect the future, St. Luke 12:16-21; Mark 8:36.

B. As the unjust steward manifested prudence, v. 8, by using what was still at his disposal for his future security, v. 3-7, even so we are to show prudence by following our Savior's admonition, v. 9, and using our present earthly possessions in laying up for ourselves treasures in heaven, Matt. 25:34-40; 2 Cor. 9:6; Luke 12:22-34, 42-44; 6:33-35; 1 Tim. 4:8; Luke 14:13, 14.

C. Verily, have we fully invested all our earthly possessions in the cause of the life to come? What have we done for the poor, the needy, the distressed, the souls hungering for the Gospel and thirsting for the waters of salvation? Have we been good and faithful stewards?

Conclusion. As the Lord hears our cry for help and pardons our iniquities through Christ, may we determine the more to employ all our earthly possessions with prudence.

TH. F. NICKEL



Miscellanea

The Place of Men in the Christian Day School

Today as never before in the history of our country women are entering professions and business careers. Within certain physical limitations the weaker sex is furnishing proof that woman is capable of learning, of producing, and of managing as well as man.

The teaching profession has long attracted women. Our public elementary school system of today rests mostly on their shoulders. Catholic elementary schools are taught almost exclusively by women. There was a time when our Lutheran Christian day schools were taught almost altogether by men especially trained for school and congregational work. Gradually it was found expedient to employ lady teachers. Today the *Lutheran Annual* lists approximately 450 woman teachers for our schools. According to a conservative estimate, about one fourth of the teachers in our Lutheran schools will be woman teachers in the near future, and this number will very likely rise considerably as the crying teacher shortage continues and increases.

It is fortunate for our schools that many women teach in them. The touch of woman's hand is pleasantly felt. Woman is ideally fitted for the work of teaching children. Her motherly disposition and inclination is desirable for the training of small children. Her fine attention to detail fits her well for performing the innumerable and tedious little details which many parents expect the school to perform and which make an easy transition for the child from the home environment to a realistic world via the early school years.

Many struggling little schools have been brought through their years of infancy by a woman teacher, and many of our large schools employ woman teachers in the lower and in the intermediate grades, and they are satisfied to do so. We must, however, take care that we do not overestimate the place of women in our system of Christian elementary education to the exclusion or even to the curtailment of the masculine element.

In spite of our tremendous social upheaval, or, rather, on account of it, the place of the woman is still in the home. Every reader of these lines could cite examples of family and child neglect where women have left their homes in order to take their place in business and in the professions. Many of our school problems can be traced directly to the fact that woman and mother has left home. Early child training which should have been taken care of at home is often neglected, and the schools are blamed for failing to cope satisfactorily with disciplinary problems that have their roots in the home. Our Lord evidently does not intend woman primarily for a profession outside the home when He speaks thus in 1 Tim. 5:14: "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house."

There are those who argue that we must employ as teachers women rather than men because it eases the congregational treasury. It is true

that many congregations could not have a school if they were to provide a teacherage and a salary sufficient to support a teacher's family besides providing for their pastor's needs. But it is also true that a sense of false economy has often proved detrimental to the school and to the congregation. Many congregations have labored under an imaginary load of raising a pittance for a woman teacher or for a candidate for a long time. When the school began to expand and when interest for it increased in the congregation, it became a matter of joy to salary one, two, and three men teachers. It is still true that "he who sows sparingly, reaps sparingly." The effort of providing large donations and gifts for the work of Christian education often returns in the most bountiful blessings to a congregation.

The tenure of woman teachers is generally much shorter than that of men. The training of woman teachers therefore requires a greater investment to Synod for the returns received than it does for the training of men teachers, because as a rule men teachers serve the Church for a lifetime. This increased cost of the training of woman teachers must be borne by our congregations and by individuals in the congregation who often try to save a little salary when they employ woman teachers in preference to men teachers.

Children imitate consciously and unconsciously the adults with whom they are most closely associated. Such imitation is not restricted to outward actions and appearances, but a child's behavior patterns, his emotional control or the lack of it, his mode of thinking, and the manner in which he reacts to his environment are all determined to a great extent by his early impressions and by what he has copied from his adult associates. Thinking people have long deplored the lack of masculine impressions upon the children in many of our public elementary schools.

In most families occasions arise when it becomes necessary for the father to introduce stern measures of discipline because the adolescent boy or girl or a younger child refuses to be corrected by the mother. We have a counterpart of this situation in our schools. There is little wonder that the Lord holds primarily the father responsible for the Christian training of the children.

There is still a limit to the service which our woman teachers can render to the congregation and to the school. Many occasions arise in the school, in the congregation, and in the community which can be dealt with more successfully by men than by women. Our men teachers are the keymen on many committees which deal with problems in Christian education. To be sure, the pastor is the leading man in representing the school before the Board of Christian Education, the church council, and the congregation. But with our widespread developments in the field of Christian education our pastors often appreciate the fact that they can call upon their men teachers to stand side by side with them, to advise them, and to shoulder much of the responsibility in directing the work.

Who will estimate the far-reaching results of the value of our men teachers to Synod during the last 100 years in their various capacities as members of synodical boards and committees, as faculty members of our teachers' colleges, speakers at conferences and conventions, youth workers, musicians, writers of articles on Christian education, and as

workers in many other capacities in which they have applied their full masculine strength in building the Kingdom of God among the younger generations? And who can estimate the potential usefulness of our men teachers in the future with the increased emphasis which is being laid upon teacher training at present?

Much of the solidity found in our schools and in our school systems can be traced to the fact that the office of the Lutheran man teacher is considered auxiliary to that of the pastor and that he is divinely and permanently called by the congregation. The ease with which a woman teacher can be engaged and dismissed may be a convenience to some congregations, but it can hardly build for solidity in our schools and for the necessary raising and maintaining of the proper respect for the teaching personnel.

Juvenile delinquency is making shocking inroads into our society, into the churches, schools, and homes. In times like these our Church is confronted with the challenge to place into our schools the best masculine timber available. Many of our homes are crumbling.

Teachers of parochial schools as well as teachers of the public schools are unanimous in declaring that the last few years have multiplied the difficulties of handling school situations, and we have not yet seen the end. Shall we complacently and deliberately help to weaken the structure of our schools by shifting the increased burdens upon the shoulders of the weaker sex for the sake of congregational convenience and for the sake of false economy?

We laud the vision and the foresight of our fathers in launching forth vigorously upon the work of Christian elementary education, in establishing schools, ably taught by well-trained men teachers. Time marches on. If there ever was need for vision, foresight, and long-range planning by well-qualified and highly trained Christian men in the field of Christian elementary education, this time is now upon us. The present war crisis is weighing heavily upon our Christian day school system. Our Church can ill afford to enter the postwar developments in education on the defensive side. Now is the time to plan and to undertake aggressively a program of expansion in Christian elementary education and especially in our system of elementary schools under able male leadership.

May our Lord grant us wisdom and blessing in the all-important work of child training, and may He to that end continue to provide our Church with a sufficient number of well-trained, able, and consecrated men and women teachers.

A. H. KRAMER

Ueber das Buch F. H. Meyers "The Crux of Chronology"

An Essay to Establish the Life Time of Jesus Christ
and to Stabilize the Date of Easter*

Gemaess dem Nebentitel des Buches moechte der Verfasser vor allem die Julianische Datierung der Kreuzigung Christi feststellen. Das nimmt gleich viele Herzen fuer ihn ein. Denn da nun einmal genau der juedische Tag und Monat hierfuer von der Schrift angegeben wird und die Roemer die Oberhoheit im Lande fuehrten, sie

* Erschienen im Verlag von Bruce Humphries, Inc., Boston, 1942.

also auch ihre Julianischen Daten fuer die juedischen gebrauchten, moechte gar mancher wissen, welches das Julianische Datum der Kreuzigung Christi war. Dafuer hat denn ein Forscher in die alten Zeitrechnungen einzugehen. Der Verfasser tut das in ausgiebigster Weise. Seine Kapitelueberschriften zeigen, dass er so ziemlich alle alten Zeitrechnungen bespricht; ein etwas starrer Stoff, aber der Autor weiss durch Darstellungs- und Ausdrucksweise den Leser bei der Lektuere gefangen zu halten. Wir sehen vor unsern Augen die Nabonassische Aera vorueberziehen, ebenso in etwas die Assyrisch-Babylonische. Es marschieren die roemischen Konsuln in langer Reihe daher. Auch die Seleuzidische Aera wird genuegend beachtet. Auf Caesars Kalenderverbesserung wird eingegangen, ebenfalls die wundervolle 28jaehrige Periode des Sonnensystems behandelt. Der juedische Kalender musste besprochen werden. So ist das Buch eine Quelle vielen wissenschaftlichen Materials, die jedoch in klarer, durchsichtiger Weise ihre Wasser spendet. — An Hand eines solchen umfangreichen Unterbaues erstrebt der Verfasser den Bau seiner Forschungen. Und dabei ist sonderlich als Fortschritt des Wissens zu betonen, dass er das Jahr der Kreuzigung Christi und das Jahr des Konsulats der Gemini wieder vereinigt als das 15. Jahr der Alleinherrschaft des Tiberius. Schon jahrhundertlang ist ja dies Jahr fuer die Zeit der Kreuzigung Christi ausgeschaltet gewesen, da man, wie einst im 17. Jahrhundert Petav, 29 A. D. fuer das Jahr des Konsulats der Gemini und das 15. Jahr des Tiberius erklarte. Aber es sind zu viele alte Zeugnisse dafuer vorhanden, dass Christus just in dem Jahr, als die Gemini Konsuln waren, den Tod erlitt. Doch der Kirche zuliebe wollte man nicht von dem Jahre 30 A. D. als Todesjahr unsers Herrn Jesu abgehen, ohne jedoch solches Verfahren als historische Tatsache feststellen und begruenden zu koennen. Wider diese Konfusion der Zeiten setzt der Autor sich mit Recht, wie er auch die Zeit der Regierung des Herodes richtig auf die Jahre 36–3 v. Chr. (718–751 a. u. c.) ordnet und also (wie Josephus erklart: "im 7. Jahre des Herodes") der Schlacht bei Aktium mit Recht das alte Datum, 2. Sept. 30 v. Chr., 724 a. u. c., von neuem reserviert. Selbstverstaendlich begann dann die Aera Augusti in Aegypten nicht 30, sondern am 25. Aug. 29 v. Chr. So zeigt der Verfasser chronologischen Scharfblick. Darueber liessen sich Bruce Humphries, Boston, Mass., die Verleger des Buches, so aus: "The Crux of Chronology refers to the period of world history that is notoriously outstanding for its unparalleled chronological confusion, the time between the death of Julius Caesar and the reign of Caligula — *the Time of Jesus Christ*. Without theological or religious bias, Mr. Meyer fixes the pivotal dates of Christ's life by reconstructing and establishing a comprehensive key system of chronology. The 'key' system is the Sabbatic or seven-day-week system based on the strict Sabbatarian practice of the Jews. The calendar is worked out not for a few detached units of years but in cycles for the entire Jewish renaissance."

Leider hat Meyer nicht das massgebende Kalendarium aus der Geschichte der Kalender herausgearbeitet. Die Vereinbarung der roemischen Chronologie mit den Jahren v. u. n. Chr. ist "the crux." Es ist eigentlich recht schade, dass auch Meyer trotz seiner umfangreichen Grundlage dies nicht gelungen ist. Aber diesen Mangel hat er mit

vielen Forschern gemeinsam. Offenbar muss die richtige Darlegung oder Rekonstruktion des alten hebraeischen Kalenders einen Teil dieses massgebenden Kalenders bilden, da die Heilige Schrift von Gen. 1,1 bis Akt. 28,30 den alten hebraeischen Kalender zur Grundlage ihrer Chronologie gemacht hat und diesem der julianische Kalender richtig anzupassen ist. Wohl unterstand, nachdem Caesar den roemischen Kalender reformiert hatte, auch der hebraeische Kalender im Jahre 9 v. Chr. einer Revision, aber einen Chronologen darf so etwas nicht verwirren, sondern er hat die Zeitrechnung dann dem revidierten Kalender einzugliedern.

Meyer ist zu beglueckwuenschen, dass er einen Verleger fand fuer Aufstellungen, welche Chronologen, Historikern und Astronomen zuwider sind, die sie aber vielleicht nicht gaenzlich mit Totschweigen uebergehen duerften. Die Verleger urteilen mit Recht: "An admirable piece of scholarship, this book contributes considerable documentation to an era that has been more influential than any other in molding the progress of the Western world."

W. E. G.

Reputed Dependence of Luther on Leo the Great

At various times I have seen references to the dependence of Martin Luther on a letter of Leo I for the text of his explanation of the Second Article of the Creed. The letter was written by Leo the Great to the patriarch Flavian of Constantinople. After the synod of Ephesus, A. D. 449, Flavian had reported to Leo in detail the debate regarding the error of Eutyches which had been condemned by the Council. Leo's reply is said to have been the source of Luther's explanation of the Second Article.

The letter of Leo will be found in the collection Migne in Volume 51, Leo Magnus I, page 755 f. I have checked Leo's letter against the text of Luther's explanation of the Creed and find only the equivalent of Luther's opening sentence—"That Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, was also true man, born of the Virgin Mary." However, while the remainder of the explanation is in no sense based on Leo's letter, it is nevertheless true that the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ is taught with all possible clearness as against a heresy of Eutyches, who had proposed such a mixture of the human and the divine as to annihilate the human nature (see *Triglotta*, pp. 822 and 1047, 89). Leo's letter is undoubtedly one of the most notable statements of the Ancient Church regarding the natures of Christ. It was given the formal approval of all orthodox bishops at the Council of Chalcedon, 451. Together with the decisions of the four ecumenical councils it was considered a test of orthodoxy. The Council of Apamea, 535, reaffirmed the letter as a "true pillar of the orthodox faith," and Vigilius Tapsensis about the year 500 reports that some would have this letter read to them during the last illness as a testimony of their orthodox belief as they departed this life. But the text of the letter deals entirely with the mystery of the union of the human and divine natures in Christ and does not touch upon the redemptive nature of His work, nor does it set forth the Atonement or the believer's union with Him "in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness."

There has been no dependence on Leo's letter to Flavian when Luther wrote his famous Explanation.

THEODORE GRAEBNER

Theological Observer

The Lutheran and Lutheran Unity. In the issue of May 17, 1944, the *Lutheran* (U. L. C. A.) prints a letter written by a soldier who complains that while other Lutheran papers speak a great deal about Lutheran unity, the *Lutheran* submits no articles touching that subject. The editor, Dr. N. Mehlhorn, makes a response, and it is that response which interests us for the present. He points to the Washington Declaration (1920) and the Savannah Declaration (1934) issued by his church body, the U. L. C. A., in which he says, "The subject of Lutheran unity has been treated at length." "The Savannah Declaration led to the appointment of a commission instructed to confer with other Lutheran bodies in order to establish a united Lutheran front in America." Dr. Mehlhorn continues, "Responses were received from the American Lutheran Church, whose commissioners held meetings with ours, out of which came eventually what we now call the Pittsburgh Declaration. [The term usually employed is "Pittsburgh Agreement." A.] Its three articles were adopted at the 1940 conventions of the U. L. C. A. and of the American Lutheran Church, but the promise of pulpit and altar fellowship has not yet been fulfilled by the authorities of the latter. A commission of the Missouri Synod met that of the U. L. C. A. in [after? A.] 1935; but we are informed it declined to consider the Savannah Declaration and has not since met our representatives."

Stopping our report on Dr. Mehlhorn's remarks for a few comments, we wish to say that uninitiated readers of his response will hardly be enabled to obtain a clear picture of what happened in negotiations between the various commissions and what the present status is. As far as the A. L. C. is concerned, its Mendota Resolutions of 1942 declare that it is willing to enter into pulpit and altar fellowship with the U. L. C. A. on the basis of a full and wholehearted acceptance of and adherence to the Pittsburgh Agreement, and it speaks of the removal of existing obstacles as first being necessary. In other words, the A. L. C. is not convinced that the U. L. C. A. fully and wholeheartedly accepts the Pittsburgh Agreement—a view which certainly is justified when one recalls the large and influential minority which in the Omaha U. L. C. A. convention of 1940 fought the acceptance of this Agreement and of statements made since by prominent spokesmen of the U. L. C. A. in which the position of the minority is endorsed.

With respect to the Missouri Synod, its commission did not decline to consider the Savannah Declaration, but in the two meetings it held with the U. L. C. A. Commission it found itself in disagreement with this commission on the very first paragraph of the *Brief Statement*, the doctrinal declaration of the Missouri Synod, in which the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures is spoken of. It will be recalled that the commission of the U. L. C. A. refused to endorse what is stated there on the full inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures, some of the U. L. C. A. commissioners being unwilling to endorse the old Lutheran position that the Bible, being God's Word throughout, is free from error in whatever it says,

geographical, historical, and scientific matters included. At this point an *impasse* resulted, which automatically terminated negotiations.

Dr. Mehlhorn next mentions participation at intersynodical conferences on the part of U. L. C. A. pastors and teachers, which conferences, however, were unofficial. Then he dwells on the membership of the U. L. C. A. in the National Lutheran Council and states that "the U. L. C. A. has co-operated heartily and, we believe, effectively, with the groups that are not 'in pulpit and altar fellowship' with it, but who find no inconsistency in accepting our co-operation in planning and equipping needed ministries with personnel and material."

The final paragraph of the response should be quoted because it calls for a comment or two: "It is the conviction of the editor of the *Lutheran* that the U. L. C. A. has gone about as far in the direction of union as is possible for it to go. Our declarations are not derived from unofficial utterances in discussion groups but on [from?] the resolutions which have been adopted by our Church in convention assembled. Union of Lutheran church bodies in America is by precedent vested in action on resolutions presented and adopted by these bodies in convention assembled. So far as we are informed, only the U. L. C. A. has so expressed a desire for closer union. Other Lutheran bodies either by direct refusal or by omission of action seem to have signified their belief that the time is not at hand for anything more than 'friendly debates.' It is my opinion that these discussions, after being the accepted policy of Lutherans for about seventy-five years, have demonstrated their power to maintain our divisions." Dr. Mehlhorn's remarks are far too sweeping. To mention but one thing, he forgets that the Synodical Conference was founded with the express purpose to unite the Lutherans of America on the basis of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. He forgets, too, that the "friendly debates" have not been ineffectual, because out of them grew the Synodical Conference and a number of other alliances. The American Lutheran Church, for instance, was not founded without the aid of a number of "friendly debates" that preceded it.

In conclusion, it ought to be said that in the past true Lutheranism never had the aim and the desire to become a great organization able to wield political influence, but that its objective, wherever it remained true to its real spirit, always was to adhere to the Scriptures and to preach in its fullness the good news of the redemption through Christ Jesus. Its prayer always was that it might be and remain the Church of the Word, regardless of what others might think of its attitude and of the influence or lack of influence in external matters which might result. We hope that Lutherans throughout the world will continue to strive for unity, but that they will place higher than any success that might be achieved in negotiations loyalty to the divine Word. A.

The Church and Unionism.—Under this heading, the *Lutheran Herald* (April 11, 1944) offers its readers a letter of criticism and a fitting reply containing a noteworthy testimony to the truth. We read: "A deeply disturbed reader has sent us the following communication: 'For the benefit of many people in our Church who seem to be ignorant and very tolerant on the question of unionism, though they call themselves Lutheran, kindly publish in *Lutheran Herald* the position of

our Church on this subject in answering the following questions: 1. Is it not contrary to God's Word and our Lutheran confession and practice to bring Methodists, the Evangelical Free Church, Presbyterians, and Baptists into our Lutheran congregations and have revival meetings together with them, yes, even permit one of them to perform a ministerial act in a Lutheran congregation? 2. Have not our Lutheran church buildings been dedicated for Biblical, Lutheran worship and practice only? 3. Should we allow the sectarian churches with their revivals in our congregations to take part with their speaking, singing, and testimony? — It is not necessary to give specific answers to each of the three questions propounded; all deal with the same subject: Unionism. Unionism is usually defined as participation in worship or spiritual work with those with whom we are not in fellowship of faith, thereby being untrue to our confessional stand. The stand of our Church on this point is clear. The so-called 'Articles of Union,' on the basis of which the merger of 1917 was effected, include the following paragraph: 'The three bodies promise one another in all sincerity to follow the rule not to have spiritual fellowship and work with the Reformed churches and others who do not share our body's faith and confession.' (Article 3. Translated by the Editor.) Our stand on unionism is, accordingly, incorporated in the very document which brought our Church into being. In our relation to our sister synods of the American Lutheran Conference, we have taken the same stand. One of the basic documents of the Conference is the so-called 'Minneapolis Theses' which our Church adopted at the time the Conference was formed. Article III of this document, entitled 'Church Fellowship,' includes this statement: 'They [i. e., the bodies composing the Conference] agree that the rule *Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors only, and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only* is not only in full accord with, but necessarily implied in, the teachings of the divine Word and the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. This rule, implying the rejection of all unionism and syncretism, must be observed as setting forth a principle elementary to sound and conservative Lutheranism.' This, then, is the official stand of the Church. We do not believe that it is being transgressed by many pastors, congregations, or individuals. It should be transgressed by none."

Unionism, especially as here described, is indeed a flagrant transgression of God's commands and a most serious hindrance to true church unity. Witness against it, by word and deed, is therefore of utmost importance and necessity, and the *Lutheran Herald* has done well in pointing out the official stand both of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America and of the American Lutheran Conference against it. Refusal to heed Scripture on this and other points must, of course, be followed by that salutary church discipline which Scripture, too, prescribes.

J. T. M.

Methodists and the Teaching of Doctrine. A Methodist bishop stated some time ago that the distinctive characteristic of the Methodist Church is that Methodists have no distinctive doctrine. It seems that Methodists are beginning to experience whither such indifference to doctrine ultimately will lead, for Chaplain W. W. Harding says in the *Chris-*

tian Advocate: "One observation is that persons who attend services and evidence religious interest are predominantly not those to whom denominations do not matter. Catholics, Lutherans, Adventists, and various doctrinaire groups furnish the most religiously evident persons in the Army. Conversely, the soldiers to whom denomination means little or nothing are the men to whom religion itself is hardly significant." Methodism, which claims to emphasize exclusively Christian living, is beginning to realize that an emotional sermon will never reach the desired goal. May the Lutheran Church continue to be a doctrinal Church, not only in its instruction of the children, but also in its preaching in the pulpit.

F. E. M.

Canterbury and the Church's Social Obligations.—The archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. William Temple, recently published a comprehensive article in which he speaks of the position of the Church and the Christian in the world today. The article is surprisingly conservative when one considers the many contacts that the archbishop has had with social gospel people. To a far greater extent than a person would expect he emphasizes the old truths that have always been set forth by conservative theologians in such a context. It is impossible for us to reprint the article. Nor can we here well present a penetrating critique of everything the archbishop submits. We should like to acquaint our readers with some of the chief views he espouses.

The archbishop believes that what Christians who have earnestly grappled with the questions involved have arrived at as their conclusions can be presented in five affirmations or decisions. The first one is a decision "for God who has spoken." "A 'decision for God' involves a sharp separation in thought, and therefore in the long run in practice, from many dominant tendencies of our time which seek the whole fulfillment of man's life in his earthly existence." A second decision is "for neighbor." "Between the decision for God and the decision for neighbor there is a most intimate connection. In the New Testament these are always intertwined. We should in all remembrance of God remember also our neighbor and in all thought of our neighbor think also of God. Our highest act of worship is not a mystic 'flight of the alone to the Alone,' but a fellowship meal, a Holy Communion. We come before God as 'our Father,' to whom all His other children have the same right of access; the truth about God is, among other things, His universal Fatherhood." The third decision is "for man as rooted in nature." "There is need of a much clearer recognition of the part played in human behavior by subconscious egoisms, interests, deceptions, and determinisms imposed by man's place in nature and history, by his cultural patterns, and by his sinfulness." "If Christians are to act with effect in the temporal order, it is necessary, as was said at the beginning, to distinguish more clearly than is commonly done between the two distinct spheres of life, the secular and the sacred, the civil and the ecclesiastical, the State and Church or the different realms of Law and Gospel." The fourth decision is "for history." "If history is to have a meaning, there must be some central point at which that meaning is decisively disclosed. The Jews found the meaning of their history in the call of Abraham, the deliverance from Egypt, and the covenant with God following upon it. For Mohammedans the meaning of history has its

center in Mohammed's flight from Mecca. For Marxists the culminating meaning is belief in the emergence of the proletariat. The Nazis vainly pinned their hopes to the coming of Hitler. For Christians the decisive meaning of history is given in Christ." "A decision for history confronts us with two urgent practical tasks. The first is to disabuse the minds of people of the notion, which is widespread and infects to a large extent current Christian preaching, that Christianity is in essence a system of morals, so that they have lost all understanding of the truth, so prominent in the New Testament, that to be a Christian is to share in a new movement of life and to co-operate with new regenerating forces that have entered into history. The second task is to restore hope to the world through a true understanding of the relation of the kingdom of God to history as a transcendent reality that is continually seeking and partially achieving embodiment in the activities and conflicts of the temporal order."

The fifth decision is "for the Gospel and the Church." "In the tasks of society Christians can and must co-operate with all those, Christians or non-Christians, who are pursuing aims that are in accord with the divinely intended purpose of man's temporal life. But Christians are constrained to believe that in the power of the Gospel of redemption and in the fellowship of the Church lies the chief hope of the restoration of the temporal order to health and sanity. What none but utopians can hope for the secular world should be a matter of actual experience in the Church. For the Church is the sphere where the redemptive act of God lifts men into the most intimate relation with himself and through that with one another. When this is actually experienced, the stream of redemptive power flows out from the Church through the lives of its members into the society which they influence. But only a Church firm in the faith set forth in outline earlier in this essay can give to its members the inspiration which they need for meeting the gigantic responsibilities of this age. Spiritual resources far beyond anything now in evidence will be needed. It may be that the greatness of the challenge will bring home to Christians how impotent they are in themselves, and so lead to that renewal which will consist in rediscovery of the sufficiency of God and manifestation of His power."

The thoughts contained in the quotations submitted above are couched in somewhat philosophical language, and at times it is not easy to understand the archbishop. Now and then the thought seems rather vague and indefinite. The emphasis on the doctrine of free grace and full forgiveness through the work of Christ is lacking. But one is glad to see that this prominent churchman at least turns away from the social gospel as it is preached by Modernism and insists that what is needed is the preaching of the Gospel of redemption. A.

Lutheran Literature in Spanish — Through Dr. Streufert we have heard of translations of Lutheran works that have appeared in Buenos Aires in the Spanish language. The volumes are very neat and attractive. Among them is Luther's exposition of the Lord's Prayer: "Martino Lutero, El Padranuestro"; Melancthon's article on Justification by Faith in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession: "Felipe Melancthon, La Justificacion Por La Fe"; and Luther's famous treatise on the Liberty

of the Christian Man: "La Libertad Cristiana." It fills a person with joy to see this dissemination of Lutheran gems in a Roman Catholic country and, at that, in the language of the people. May the venture continue and help to spread the saving truth. A.

The Seventh Luther Academy. Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, will hold the sessions of the Lutheran Academy this year from July 11 to 20. Last year, it will be recalled, the Academy was not in session on account of war conditions. The topics to be discussed are the following: Studies in the Gospel According to St. John, The Basis of Luther's Social Ethic, Selected Old Testament Texts, Social Problems Facing the Church, Illustrated Lectures on Church Art, Preaching in Our Day, Some Recent Literature in the Field of Church History, Qualifications for the Ministry, The Church and the Service Men, The Family Altar and Evangelism, Challenge of Latin America, The Liturgical Movement in Non-Lutheran Protestantism, Eight Meditations on the Means of Grace (Chapel Services), Visual Aids Clinic (Lectures and Demonstration). Inquiries for rates and reservations are to be addressed to Rev. W. F. Goetz, Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.

Economics and Religion.—A writer in *America* (Roman Catholic weekly) quite thoroughly and in an enlightening manner expounds the view of recent Popes on economic issues. He contends that economic liberalism is dead and yet is often spoken of as though it still were the dominant force in the economic life and development of our country. What is meant by economic liberalism is stated in words of Macaulay written about a hundred years ago, "Our rulers will best promote the improvement of the people by strictly confining themselves to their own legitimate duties—by leaving capital to find its most lucrative course, commodities their fair price, industry and intelligence their natural reward, idleness and folly their natural punishment—by maintaining the peace, by defending property, by diminishing the price of law, and by observing strict economy in every department of the State. Let the Government do this—the people will assuredly do the rest." Roman Catholic leadership took issue with this view and condemned, as *America* says, "the practice of unlimited competition." The reason given is that "such competition favors the survival of those who are strongest or who pay the least heed to the dictates of conscience." It is contended that "rugged individualism has destroyed free enterprise." "In the course of time," so our writer says, "the ideal of free competition was largely dropped, and emphasis was laid on freedom of contract and freedom from State interference." Against this position the Church's leadership urged recognition of the "natural right of workers to organize and bargain collectively with their employers." It was even suggested that it would be a good thing if the wage contract were modified by a partnership arrangement which would give to labor a share in the ownership or management or profits of business. And employers were reminded that "a just wage is a family living wage and that an economic system which provided less was badly in need of overhauling." The ideal of freedom from State interference likewise was declared wrong. The principle was enunciated, "The civil power is more than the mere guardian of law and order." Governments are praised which have

become "more conscious of their obligation to see that justice is done to the working class and to promote a broader social policy." Just as free competition cannot be regarded as the ideal to be striven for in a state, so economic despotism (the right and practice of the employer to deal with the individual employee rather than with the whole group) "must be curbed and ruled by the State." In modern society, as it is constituted at present, the State is "bound to intervene for the purpose of protecting the common good."

We have quoted extensively because in this article of *America* the issues with which modern economic debates concern themselves are clearly stated. For the Bible Christian the issues can be put in these three questions: Does the Bible, our sacred rule for doctrine and life, tell us whether the principle of free competition should be defended or opposed? Does it say whether freedom of contract on the part of the employer and the individual employee must be upheld or condemned? Does it teach that the State may pass special legislation for the benefit of the less privileged classes, or does it state that such a course would be unethical? The answer is obvious. The Bible is not a book dealing with questions of political science and economics. It does not legislate for the State. It does lay down broad rules for the individual Christian. It has given us a grand maxim: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." That the Christian should remember and follow this rule not merely in his home and his private life but also in his business dealings and in his political activities as well, we believe no one will dispute. The special forms in which this disposition of love and helpfulness toward the neighbor must manifest itself have to be determined by circumstances and cannot be enumerated in advance. These few lines are written in the hope that they will help our readers in their endeavor to clarify their own thinking on the question where and to what extent religious principles must be heeded in the economic field.

A.

Do Our Seminaries Require More Courses in Professional Skills? —

On this subject Dr. Foelsch, president of the Chicago Lutheran Seminary of the U. L. C. A., says in the course of an article in the *Lutheran* of April 5:

"Men blame the seminaries; and in no small way they are rightly blamed. The seminaries produce the preachers; therefore the Church, humanly speaking, cannot possibly be greater than its seminaries; and the people — *qualis rex, talis grex!* Now where lies the trouble at the seminaries? Here is one trouble — our faculties are often so busy with peripheral matters that the one thing the Church rightly demands of a theological professor, to *think*, is honored in the breach.

"The aim of the superior man is truth, and he'll not find it listening to the throb of Pullman wheels as he dashes off to meetings — literally in all directions — at the call of this or that board or committee or commission. He *may* render a worthy bit of help here or there or yonder, but meantime his main business is neglected. Now don't blame the professor, but blame the Church for this. One can't imagine Henry Eyster Jacobs constantly being called hither and yon to meetings at somebody's whim. Nor Revere Franklin Weidner! Those giants spent

long hours in their study daily — and studied, prayerfully delving deep. That's how they came to be giants of the mind and of theology! They thought the faith through and caught its glory and made the dogmatical riches of it, locked up in other languages, available to the Church in America. Their students were taught to think it through, too, and then went out passionately to preach that 'systematic but fundamentally simple doctrine.' 'In this crisis' we must have mentors who think, who know why and what they believe, every jot and tittle of it.

"Let the seminaries, therefore, not yield to the ill-considered demand for more courses in professional skills. The tricks of the trade have their day and cease to be. Tomorrow there will be a new way of folding the hands as one walks across the chancel and a new approach to church publicity, perhaps even a new technique of evangelism. What, then, if a preacher's brain and heart and hand hold but skills; how can he be a flame of fire, how a messenger of God?" A.

Merger of Congregational-Christian and Evangelical-Reformed Churches Planned. A report from Philadelphia states that committees of the two church bodies mentioned have held a joint meeting and have approved tentative plans for the merger of their church bodies. It is stated that public opinion in both bodies seems to favor the merger. In June both churches will meet in their regular conventions to discuss the report of the joint committee. Final action consummating the merger is expected in 1946. The sponsors of the union have some difficulty in finding a name for the new body. The following names have been suggested: "The United Church"; "The United Church in America"; "The United Church, a Communion of the Church of Christ in America"; "The Church of Christ in the United States." If the union is brought about, the new body will number about two million members. Considering the laxity with respect to doctrine prevailing in the circles concerned, a merger of these bodies seems to be the logical thing. A.

Bigotry Characterized. In an address which Dr. P. O. Bersell, president of the Augustana Synod, delivered at the installation of Dr. S. C. Eastbold as president of the Pacific Lutheran College, Parkland, Wash., November 28, 1943, he quoted these words of a Lutheran college president concerning that "pseudo-Christianity which fosters bigotry, dogmatism, and intolerance," "It places Christian faith on any Procrustean bed that happens to be the rational model at that time, and the body of living faith is reduced to a manageable corpse." Everybody will admit that that is striking phraseology. Too often in their attempts to rationalize their doctrines and to put them into a certain mold or pattern, theologians do twist and wrench the Scripture passages to such an extent that they become denatured and no longer have any life in them. This wrong use of Scripture texts must, of course, not induce a person to go to the other extreme and take all Scripture texts lightly, confining himself to bare generalities. The answer to intolerance is not toleration of error. The Christian theologian who prayerfully adheres to the teachings of the Word of God as they appear on the sacred page will avoid the two extremes, that of dogmatism and bigotry and that of doctrinal laxity and indifference. A.

Episcopalian Disunity. In an article in the *Christian Century* of May 10 having the title "What Is Disturbing Episcopalians?" Prof. W. Norman Pittenger, member of the faculty of General Theological Seminary, New York, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, says among other things, in discussing difficulties which his church body faces, that with respect to the ministry there is a difference which "becomes marked, aggravated, sometimes painful in the extreme." "The recent discussion of relations with the Presbyterians and the several proposals made in that regard have in my opinion done more to create discord in the Episcopal Church than anything that has happened for many years. The reason for this is plain: These proposals have forced out into the open the real differences and divergences which were latent. New alignments have been brought about; varying kinds of Evangelicals and Catholics, Liberals of one sort or another, have found themselves in agreement with those whom they had formerly considered 'in the other camp.' But by and large Catholics of all stripes, conservative and liberal, and Evangelicals of all stripes, oldfashioned and 'ecumenical,' have taken opposing positions, while the central body has found that in the main it was sympathetic with attempts at reunion but suspicious of any plan that would alter, in any degree, the place of the episcopate as the Episcopal Church has generally, if vaguely, maintained it. The question has not been a simple one. It is not merely whether the episcopate is of the esse of the church and whether therefore the proposed plan did or did not water it down or give it away. It has been much deeper. It has concerned the whole matter of order, of the relation of church as Body of Christ to ministry as representative functioning agent of that Body, of the place of the episcopate in such a functional ministry — or, in essence, the relation of faith and order."

Speaking of the role which this subject played at the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church last year, Dr. Pittenger says, "It was, so some of us think, only by the grace of God that a very serious break, if not in actual allegiance, at least in friendship and common *loyal* membership, was prevented last autumn when the General Convention met to discuss these and many other questions. The statesmanship of four widely trusted bishops, the Christian understanding of men like the new bishop of Washington, who tempered the proposals so that they could be accepted for discussion but not taken as binding on the church, and the almost providential refusal of delegates to engage in public controversy on the matter, saved the Episcopal Church from a display of real, maybe fatal, disagreement within itself. What would have happened had the proposals been actually adopted? It is hard to say in detail; what is certain is that a large group of devout Episcopalians of the catholic persuasion would have found their position extraordinarily difficult, perhaps impossible in the long run. This may be regrettable, but it happens to be true."

It is impossible for a Lutheran who has learned from 1 Peter 2 that all Christians are priests and from 1 Corinthians 3 and 4 that ministers are but servants, and that hence they do not constitute a special rank, and who through his reading of the New Testament in general has become convinced that our Lord and the Apostles did not establish a

hierarchy, to see how the Protestant Episcopal contention concerning the authority and succession of bishops can be held. Here there is one of the vestiges of Romanism which the Church of England kept and cultivated. And that it is by no means an innocuous relic is now becoming apparent. A.

The Case of Father Orlemanski. Who is Father Orlemanski? Newspaper readers know that he recently went to see Stalin and that since he had no authorization to interview that leader, he was suspended and now professing repentance is re-instated as priest of the Catholic Church. *America* (Jesuit weekly) says, "Father Orlemanski, like the prophets, is not without honor save in his own country; for Moscow went all out to make him welcome. His coming was front page news, and the wire photo services hummed with his picture, in company with Marshal Stalin and M. Molotov. Evidently Father Orlemanski is someone of importance in Soviet eyes. His purpose, he told the A.P. correspondent, is to promote a democratic Poland, friendly to the U.S.S.R." According to the *Christian Century*, Roman Catholic spokesmen declared that Father Orlemanski "represented only himself and not the Church in his mission to Moscow, and that he has gone off the reservation entirely in collaborating with the arch-Communist and announcing to the world the Soviet leader's benevolent intentions toward Poland and religion." It appears quite certain that what this priest pleaded for in his interview with Stalin was not religious liberty for Poland, but special privileges for the Roman Catholic hierarchy. This is what he said, "As to religion, the religion of our forefathers shall be the religion of the Polish people, and Marshal Stalin will not tolerate any transgression in this regard."

This is fully consonant with the Roman hierarchy's conception of freedom of religion where the majority of inhabitants are Roman Catholics. A.

A Decision Pertaining to Religious Liberty. In the case of the United States vs. Ballard, which was before the United States Supreme Court not long ago, a decision was handed down for which one must be truly grateful. The case had to do with the "I am" movement, a thoroughly fantastic, heterodox, faith-destroying affair. In a Federal court a jury had condemned certain promoters of this movement on the charge that they were using the mails to defraud people. The issue, as the judge pointed out to the jury, was not whether the religious views of the defendants were right or wrong, but whether they were conscious, deliberate deceivers, using their religious tenets to enrich themselves at the expense of gullible people, tenets which they themselves did not believe. The Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the judgment and held that consideration of the religious beliefs of these people should not have been excluded from the trial. The United States Supreme Court set aside this decision of the Court of Appeals and upheld the first judge in his view of the case. The decision according to the *Christian Century* contained these statements, "Freedom of thought embraces the right to maintain theories of life and of death and of the hereafter which are rank heresy to the followers of the orthodox faiths. Heresy trials are foreign to our Constitution. Men may believe, but they cannot prove. They may not be put to the proof of their religious doctrines or beliefs.

... The miracles of the New Testament, the divinity of Christ, life after death, the power of prayer, are deep in the religious convictions of many. If one could be sent to jail because a jury in a hostile environment found these teachings false, little would be left of religious freedom. . . . The religious views espoused by respondents might seem incredible, if not preposterous to most people. But if those doctrines are subject to trial before a jury charged with finding their truth or falsity, then the same can be done with the religious beliefs of any sect."

These words represent true Americanism.

A.

Religious Conditions in France. A very disquieting item appeared in a correspondence from Lisbon printed in the *Christian Century*. Speaking of France, the writer says, "Those who believe that any important change in the religious situation in France has been brought to pass by recent events there might well ponder some facts given by Father H. Godin and Father Y. Daniel in an article in a recent number of *Le Christianisme au XXe Siecle*. For example, a priest who was challenged to find 12 avowed Christians among the workers in a parish of 40,000 could not do so. Among 70,000 women doing 'voluntary' labor in Germany last year the chaplain appointed to work among civilians knew only 30 names. Of these, only 10 were interested in the Catholic Youth Movement. After the age of 20 only one person of the young workers of Paris continued to receive religious instruction, and the figure falls to one in 300 between the ages of 20 and 40." In other words, the population of France is reverting to paganism. The Roman Catholic Church is still carrying on its work with its externalism and emphasis on ceremonies, but it has lost its influence on the masses. A.

The Methodist General Convention. Early in May this year the General Convention of the Methodist Church, representing eight million members, met in Kansas City, Mo. The convention made the headlines chiefly because, contrary to predictions, it adopted a resolution supporting the war. The respective vote among the clergy was very close, 170 ministers voting affirmatively and 169 negatively. The vote among the lay delegates in favor of the resolution was 203 to 131. The committee in a majority report had merely recommended that the 1940 position should be reaffirmed, according to which "the Methodist Church will not officially endorse, support, or participate in war." The resolution proposed by the minority report and adopted by the convention reads, "God Himself has a stake in the struggle. . . . In Christ's name we ask for the blessing of God upon the men in the armed forces, and we pray for victory. . . . We are well within the Christian position when we assert the necessity of the use of military force to resist an aggression which would overthrow every right which is held sacred by civilized men." To us it seems that the majority report was based on solid ground when it held that the Church should not pass judgment on a political question.

From the *Protestant Voice* we glean a number of additional facts about the convention and the Methodist Church in general. Methodists now have 25,377 preachers. The denomination in four years has lost 432,168 pupils in its Sunday schools. Of its foreign missionaries 1,200 are still active and three fourths of all its foreign fields are still operating.

The attempt to obtain full preaching rights for women was overwhelmingly defeated. Gen. Chiang Kai Shek, a Methodist, had cabled greetings. From another report we learn that total wartime prohibition was endorsed. A.

Brief Items.—Twenty missionaries of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America stationed near the Chinese battle front have been able to carry on their work during the last year without interference from the Japanese, it was reported at the annual meeting of the Church's Foreign Board. It was voted to call four Seniors at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, as new missionaries to China. They will study the language for one year at Berkeley, Calif.—*The Lutheran*.

On April 8 Dr. Sidney B. Snow, president of the Unitarian Meadville Theological Seminary, died in Chicago. This seminary is now affiliated with the Divinity School of University of Chicago.

According to press reports the bombing to which Germany is subjected has destroyed big stores of theological books, for instance, in that great book center Leipzig. When that city was bombed, the so-called "publishers' district" was wiped out, and an untold number of theological books perished. Germany, and with it the world, apparently faces a famine of theological books.

The Bible now has either wholly or in part been published in 1,062 languages. In 1943 four new languages were employed to give parts of the Scriptures to the respective people—Walamo, which is used in Ethiopia, Yipounou and Yisangou for sections of French Equatorial Africa, and Gunwingu, which latter language is spoken by natives of Northern Australia.

The Roman Catholic press in Great Britain and America generally see a political motive behind the statement recently made by Patrick Sergius of the Russian Orthodox Church challenging the Pope's right to call himself the vicar of Christ. They associate it with the fact that the Russian armies are occupying Catholic territories in Poland. So writes the *Christian Century*. Of course, Rome would manage to find some ulterior motive if its supremacy is challenged.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, so the press reports, is advocating that the palaces now forming the dwellings of English bishops be used for other purposes. Though the salaries of English bishops are very high, the expense of maintaining their establishment is enormous, and a poor person can hardly afford to become an Anglican bishop.

Concerning union with the Episcopalians, the *Presbyterian* says, "The impression is that efforts in this direction have not been very fruitful of definite results during the last year. After all, the place to build this union is in the local parish and not at the conference table of the committees." The paper favors union with the Southern Presbyterians, saying, "To us this union seems like the very first step in any kind of authentic ecumenicity. If brethren so closely connected by historic origins and natural ties cannot get together, then what practical chance is there that other unions far less natural can be consummated?"

Walther Memorial Hospital, conducted under the auspices of the Chicago Lutheran Hospital Association (1116 N. Kedzie Ave.) is looking for nurses. It "offers young women 18—35 years of age, high school graduates, a three-year nurse's course, including books, uniforms, no tuition, and with complete maintenance."

One is glad to hear that on April 17 the House of Representatives unanimously passed a resolution urging the administration to send food to the countries in Western and Northern Europe dominated by the Nazis. Similar work has already been done for poor bleeding Greece.

Someone has said that the business of the ministry is "to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." — F. W. Burnham in the *Christian Century*.

America (Roman Catholic weekly) argues against the granting of divorces by citing this instance: "A California wife instituted divorce action charging that her husband had married her on a bet; that he would drop her off at a cheap movie house, then go to a good one; that he would not let her buy the food, 'and we had Hamburger, sweet potatoes and gravy three months straight.'" Sad, of course. And still this does not justify Rome in rejecting all divorces.

Dr. Herbert L. Willett, 80, for many years one of the editors of *The Christian Century*, died March 28 at Winter Park, Florida. He was professor of Old Testament language and literature at the University of Chicago, outstanding leader of the Disciples of Christ, one of the organizers and principal pioneers of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. — F. E. M.

We fully agree with *America* when it in indignation says, "Literally tons of paper have been wasted in describing in disgusting detail the Lonergan trial, the Chaplin trial, the Rother trial, and the host of ripe divorce proceedings. . . . Should we not begin to blame . . . the press that presents so eagerly, so vividly, so minutely, every detail of every sordid case that comes along?"

Disconcerting news comes from Kentucky. Gov. Simeon Willis is said to have signed a bill which gives counties the right "to provide at their expense for transportation of both parochial and public school pupils to their schools." The Roman hierarchy has been working for such a law for a long time. On the face of it, it may seem a fair provision. What is alarming is that here the State supports sectarian schools. From here it is merely one step to direct support of private religious schools with the funds of the State.

Concerning the men returning from the front as casualties, between one third and one half, we are told, are suffering from mental or nervous illness. (See *America* for April 8, 1944.) With respect to them a difficult task faces Christian pastors.

A.

Book Review

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo.

Moses—Builder of Altars. By Basil Miller. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 154 pages, 5½×8. \$1.50.

Dr. Miller, the author, is a very prolific writer, but in the present volume he becomes guilty of many inaccuracies which mar the usefulness of the book. There is no warrant for the author's statement that Queen Hatshepsut "on the walls of this sand-covered palace, only recently excavated, wrote the story of her discovery of Moses in the Nile and under her own signature verifies the facts Moses penned in his autobiographical second chapter of Exodus" (18). It is very doubtful whether "rightly Gershom, Moses' first-born son, could be called the contender for the Egyptian throne" (21). The statement that Moses at the time he slew the Egyptian "had not attempted Israel's deliverance, for he had not yet caught the delivering vision," is in direct contradiction of Acts 7:25. We would hardly subscribe to the statement that Mount Horeb "which was Israel's spiritual birthplace, possessed a significance corresponding to that which Independence Hall holds for Americans." Highly as we regard Independence Hall, there is a vast difference between that and Mount Horeb. It was not "the group of men" that encouraged Korah and his company to burn incense before the Lord, but Moses himself in order to bring the whole matter to a test. Num. 16:5-7, 16-18 (114). Neither is there any indication that after this incident Moses "began to fail in taking his leadership responsibilities to the Lord" (116). And again the author contradicts the Biblical statements, Num. 21:1 compared with Num. 33:36-38, when he asserts that thirty-eight years elapsed after the disobedience of Moses and Aaron, and describes Moses during these years as a "man of one dimension" (118). These are some of the inaccuracies which make us hesitate to recommend this book to our readers.

THEO. LAETSCH

The Person of Christ. By Loraine Boettner, D.D. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. 215 pages, 5¼×7¾. \$2.00.

The Lutheran theologian will find much valuable material in this lucid and vigorous presentation of the doctrines of the Person, the States, and the Offices of Christ. He will profit by studying the way in which the deep mysteries of the deity of Christ, His humanity, His impeccability together with His temptability, the anhypostasia, and enhypostasia, the union of the two natures and other related matters are here presented in simple language. He will regret that while our author subscribes to the teaching of Scripture and the ancient Church on the *genus idiomaticum* ("What can be affirmed of either of His natures can be affirmed of the person. . . . The chief error of the Nestorian system was that in separating the divine and human natures

it deprived His human sufferings of the value and efficacy that they must have if they are to be sufficient for the redemption of mankind," pp. 103, 207), he will not accept the *genus majestaticum* ("Human nature is ever finite, Reformed theology declares, and is no more capable of infinite *charismata* than of the infinite *idiomata* or attributes of the divine nature. . . . As a man He did not and never can become omniscient, for the simple reason that human souls by their very nature are finite," pp. 83, 86), and that he has yielded to the chiliastic delusion ("It is true, of course, that the Old Testament prophecies do foretell a great golden age of political freedom and material prosperity in connection with the Messianic kingdom. . . . The world is to be eventually conquered by the Church," pp. 161, 191). With these exceptions, Dr. Boettner refuses to be swayed by "the philosophical assumption that the supernatural is impossible" (p. 102) and sticks to the principle that Scripture is the sole source and norm of Christian doctrine. And the Christian theologian rejoices to read a book like this, in which page after page is filled with Scripture passages and which rests its case exclusively on a quotation from Scripture.—We also want to call attention to the fact that our learned author does not disdain to make copious use of his "Shorter Catechism." Abstruseness is not a mark of good theology.

The Modernists, too, might study our book profitably. They would learn that they are the descendants of the ancient heretics. "The earliest heretical view concerning the person of Christ was that known as 'Ebionism.' . . . It denied the possibility of a union of the divine and the human nature and so ruled out the doctrine of the incarnation. They acknowledged Him only as a great prophet or teacher during His earthly career" (p. 202). And "not until the rise of Socinianism in the sixteenth century do we find an important defection from the Church doctrine; and that was in substance a recrudescence of the ancient Ebionite heresy, which denied the deity of Christ. Present-day Unitarianism and Modernism, which are essentially denials of the supernatural in religion, trace their origin back to the same movement" (p. 210). "In the Council of Nicaea the Church faced what we believe to have been the greatest crisis in the entire history of doctrine [Arianism]. It was, however, although in a slightly different form, the same question that it faces in the twentieth century dispute between the Evangelical Faith and Modernism" (p. 205).

The concluding paragraphs of our book contain these statements: "We seem upon the verge of a second Unitarian defection that will break up churches and compel secessions in a worse manner than did that of Channing and Ware a century ago. American Christianity recovered from that disaster only by vigorously asserting the authority of Christ and the inspiration of the Scriptures.' . . . It is both our duty and privilege to tell others of this wonderful Savior and of the redemption that has been purchased for them by Him. . . . 'Without a revival of this faith our churches will become secularized, mission enterprise will die out, and the candlestick will be removed out of its place as it was with the seven Churches of Asia and as it has been with the apostate Churches of New England.'"

TH. ENGELDER

Reserves of the Soul. By J. Calvin Reid. John Knox Press, Richmond, Va. 156 pages, 5½×7½. Price, \$1.50.

Dr. Reid is a Presbyterian minister who studied theology at Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary and after his graduation, in Edinburgh and Oxford. His sermons are not without merit. They are well prepared, well organized, set forth distinctive messages, and *aliquo modo* present fundamentalist doctrine. But they also have many faults. Dr. Reid, for example, is wrong in his view of the "Word of God." "If we are to intelligently define the phrase 'the Word of God,' we refer, of course, not to the Bible in general, but to *God's supreme revelation* [italics his own] in the life and teachings of Jesus." (P.131.) In his sermon "How Can the Church Speak with Authority" (p.128 ff.) his thesis is that "it [the Church] must confront the institutions, ideas, and customs of the world with just one sharp question—*Is this in harmony with the will of God as seen in Jesus Christ?*" It is therefore God's sovereign authority that must settle the problems of business, industry, drink, and the race question. "America must eliminate the color barrier by a genuine practice of good will." In his sermon "The Contagion of Sin" (p.55 ff.) he arrives at the lesson he means to teach, namely, that sin in every case is contagious, by a strange untruth. His text 2 Kings 5:27 clearly shows that it was because of the prophet's curse that Gehazi became leprous: "The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee." But Dr. Reid traces Gehazi's leprosy to germs in Naaman's clothing, and so this becomes his untheological and unscientific theme: "Naaman's clothes always carry Naaman's leprosy." Again, it almost irks one to read that Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was "perhaps nearsightedness, or chronic malaria, possibly epilepsy" (p.48), when both text and context suggest a malady much more severe than any of these, a malady not merely of the body, but primarily of the spirit. But Dr. Reid's main fault is that often he employs texts which do not at all say what he wants to teach. In a "stewardship message" ("Leftovers for God") he uses Is. 44:17: "And the residue thereof he maketh a god," both praising this idolater for not forgetting God entirely and chiding him for making a god only of the *residue*, which he interprets to mean that he gives only his residue to God. This, of course, is sheer nonsense and a mutilation of the text content. For his Easter message ("The Eastward Window") he has chosen the text 2 Kings 13:16, 17: "And Elisha said, Open the window eastward." Beginning with the "feeble old man Elisha" and then recounting the Robin Hood death story, he arrives at Easter's threefold lesson of hope, courage, and zeal. In his conclusion, the writer, of course, applies the lessons to Easter; but there is no adequate representation of what the Bible says regarding the meaning of Easter. There is no proper representation of sin and grace, Law and Gospel, divine wrath and love, and no clear answer to the question of questions: "What must I do to be saved?" Dr. Reid's erratic way of preaching, we are told, is becoming increasingly popular also in Lutheran circles. But unless the minister selects a text that really says what he means to say, and unless he plainly explains the text to his hearers and applies it to their needs, he is not only unfaithful to

his high calling as a herald of the Word, but also wearies his hearers despite his many prose and poetic quotations; and what is worse, he is in danger of preaching neither Law nor Gospel, neither sin nor grace, as he should, and in the end he is bound to proclaim error which may damn the souls that come to him seeking salvation. There is much truth in the saying of the old Scottish divine that the preacher must not master his text, but that the text must master the preacher, which means that the preacher must not twist the text to suit his own opinions, but that the text must compel the preacher to proclaim the Word of God, as this is written in Scripture. J. THEODORE MUELLER

The Christ at the Peace Table. By Albert Field Gilmore, Litt. D. Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York. 264 pages, 9×6. \$2.75.

In the first part of the volume the author, a Christian Scientist, presents the basic principles of Christian Science. In the second part he submits a program for the social and economic reconstruction of the world according to the Christian Scientist's "Christ," i. e., the "spirit of truth." The thesis of the book is the underlying principle of Christian Science, namely, that all is mind, that this mind is good, and that there is no room for evil. The theology and the philosophy of the book are neither Christian nor scientific. F. E. MAYER

Johann Sebastian Bach. By Laurence Nathaniel Field. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. 166 pages, 5¼×8¾. Price, \$1.50.

Field's *Johann Sebastian Bach*, in the reviewer's opinion, is not only a most valuable gift book for young and old Christians interested in the revival of sacred music, but also an excellent historical study deserving a place in all parish-school and Sunday-school libraries. The author, Dean of Religion and Professor of Hymnology and Liturgics at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, tells the story of "the greatest musician of his time and perhaps of all time" (Chas. O. Connell) with such unusual charm and force as to impress on the reader's mind indelibly the life and work, the joys and sufferings, the exaltation and humiliation, and, above all, the simple childlike piety and devotion of this remarkable Lutheran follower and servant of Christ. There is in the whole book not a single paragraph that will not interest the reader, not a sentence that he will find dull. The biography, expanded from a bachelor of divinity degree thesis, everywhere manifests the author's personal attachment to, and high admiration of, the outstanding Lutheran composer, who deserved so much recognition and yet was treated so shabbily that his musical compositions, valuable beyond description, remained to a large extent unpublished until long after his death, that his widow was forced to spend her last eight years of sorrow in a wretched almshouse after she had given up her husband's priceless manuscripts to be sold for a pittance or to be shelved or to be thrown away, and then was laid to rest, away from her husband's grave, in a pauper's row, and that the great composer's own grave remained unmarked, and was finally forgotten. Ungrateful and unappreciative generations having spurned his music, it was left to Felix Mendelssohn, a man of Semitic ancestry, recognizing the value of Bach's works, to restore to the world these greatest of Christian com-

positions. The mechanical make-up of the book is excellent. A picture of Bach and a facsimile reproduction of a manuscript page of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*; the division of the biography into "books" with half-title pages marking the stages in Bach's life and musical progress; a very clarifying page of "Contents"; a carefully selected "Bibliography," and an exhaustive "Index" greatly enhance the value of the book. Well written and handsomely made up, this popular, yet exceedingly informative biography should find many friends and add new zest to the deserving modern Bach movement in ecclesiastical and secular circles. In a new edition the paragraphs telling about Bach's personal piety might perhaps be enlarged. The reviewer wonders if really, in so brief a biography, so much stress should be placed on the Bach-Marchand incident (p.63 f.) or the Bach "psychological processes" at Arnstadt (p.40 f.). Here the biography leaves its otherwise high level, and not to its advantage. Perhaps the proofreader nodded when on page 3 he permitted the writer to say that Bach was born in the year 1695. The half-title page gives the date correctly. But these are only minor flaws in a very fine book, which, we hope, will be widely read also in our own circles.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

The World's Great Sermons. Edited by S. E. Frost, Jr., B.D., Ph.D. Published by Halcyon House, New York. 395 pages, $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$. \$1.98.

When paging through this book, one notices at once that not all sermons, if any, are complete. It seems that the compiler is presenting such portions as in his estimation will give a true picture of the sermonizer. A valuable feature of the book are its short biographical sketches. It cannot escape the Lutheran reader that of all Lutheran preachers only Luther and Melancthon are given space. All shades and varieties of preachers find a place in this book, such as St. Paul, Chrysostom, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, F. W. Robertson, MacLaren, Washington Gladden, Inge, Moffatt, Coffin, Fosdick, and Rabbi Silver.

J. H. C. FRITZ

Our Church. By J. M. Weidenschilling, M.A., S.T.D. Published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 109 pages, $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. 35 cents.

Synod's Board of Christian Education is to be commended for authorizing the publication of this booklet, the contents of which had been published in the January, 1943, issues of the *Concordia Bible Student* and the *Concordia Bible Teacher*. The booklet is a revised and expanded form of this course for Bible classes. In plain language that every congregation member can understand, the author gives brief yet quite comprehensive information on many subjects that every Lutheran ought to know, as on church membership, church attendance, the liturgy of our Church, our Communion service, special services, the church year, our splendid heritage of song, our church buildings and art in the service of God, the office of the ministry, Christian education, the organization of a congregation, organizations within the congregation, and the rights and duties of a congregation with reference to Synod.

This book ought to be placed into the hands of our communicant members for home study and used by pastors and teachers in Bible classes and other educational agencies. It is truly *multum in parvo*.

THEO. LAETSCH

The Christian Boy's Problems. By Bertrand Williams. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 78 pages, 5×8. 75 cents.

The Christian Girl's Problems. Same author, same publisher. 79 pages, 5×8. 75 cents.

These are companion volumes, and we hail them as very appropriate studies to be added to the growing list of monographs on this important phase in the development of boys and girls. There is no attempt at scientific verbiage, but the author, addressing himself largely to the junior adolescents themselves, gives common-sense advice as to how to meet the difficulties which are apt to bother them. The boy is told about the need of a strong, healthy body, about relationships with girls, about his home life, and especially about his relation to his God. The young girl receives similar instruction concerning keeping herself clean and strong in body, mind, and soul. A few sentences from the concluding chapter of this book: "Getting the Most Out of the Christian Life," will indicate the character of the book: "If you would live right and prepare for a glorious young womanhood, you should not neglect this daily communion and contact with Christ. . . . Christ, who has saved you, also calls for those same talents, and as Christian girls you are to turn a deaf ear to the clamor of the world and offer your talents, your all, to Christ for His service. . . . You will find that the day goes much better if you will start it by prayerfully reading and studying the Word of God." We trust that these books will find their way to the bookshelves of many of our young Christians. Pastors will do well to use them in junior discussion groups.

P. E. KRETZMANN

To Our Subscribers

It has been our custom to retain the names of our subscribers on our lists for two numbers after the subscription has expired, so that the subscriptions could be continued without interruption in case a renewal came in late. We were very happy to follow this plan at extra expense, but we are now unable to continue this policy because of present conditions.

Our Government has insisted that we reduce consumption of paper and eliminate all possible waste. Because of the restriction in the use of paper it will become necessary to discontinue subscriptions to all of our periodicals with the last number paid for under the subscription agreement. We shall, however, continue our policy of reminding our subscribers of the expiration of the subscription by inserting the usual number of notices in the second last and the last numbers of the periodicals they receive. It is our sincere hope that our subscribers will co-operate with us and the Government by renewing their subscriptions promptly upon receipt of the first notice.

June, 1943

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